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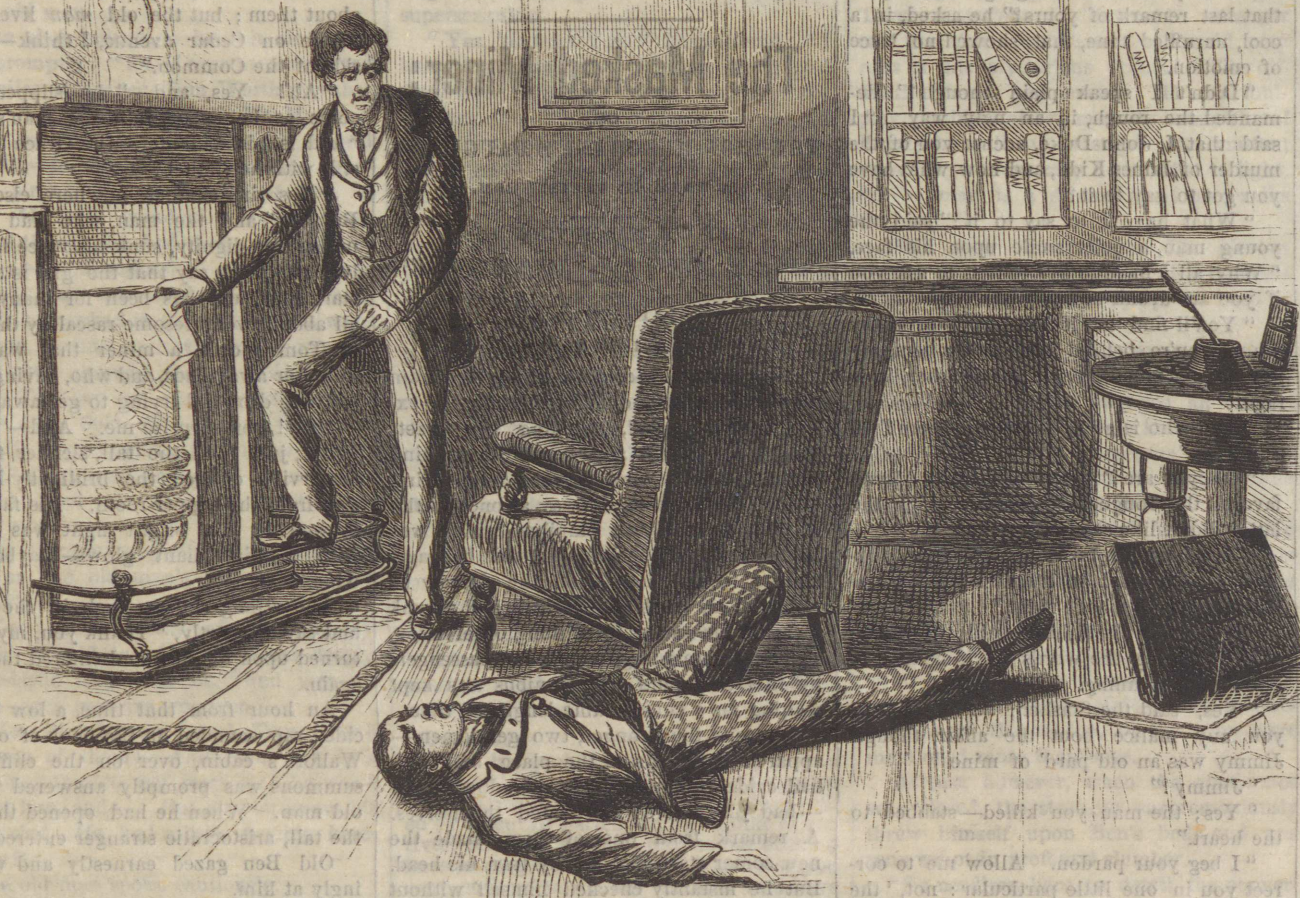
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ALLYNE HELD THE LETTER IN THE FLAME, AND IN A FEW SECONDS THE PAPER WAS ASHES.

THE SCARLET HAND;

The Orphan Heiress of Fifth Avenue.

NEW YORK HEARTHS AND NEW YORK HOMES.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

Author of "The Ace of Spades," "The Witches of New York," Etc.

CHAPTER XIV.

LOVE AND FEAR.

BLANCHE MAYBURY sat in the parlor of the Strathroy mansion. 'Twas early evening. The gas had just been lighted. Blanche sat by the window looking listlessly out upon the darkness of the avenue, which was lit up here and there by the lights flashing from the windows of the brown-stone palaces. It was the evening of the day that she had called upon Mr. Chubbet, her guardian, and made known to him her strange determination respecting Allyne Strathroy. Blanche did not feel in a pleasant mood. It was a terrible struggle to tear from her heart the image of the man that had once been cherished there; but she felt that she did not love him, and though it cost her many a bitter pang, yet she had resolved to do what she believed to be her duty. Gloomy were her thoughts as she gazed out on the broad street before her. She expected a bitter—an unpleasant interview with Allyne, when he should learn the truth, and she was nervously herself to meet the trial. "Musing alone, Blanche?" said a deep voice at her side. Startled for a moment, for she had not heard any one enter the parlor, she turned her head and beheld Allyne Strathroy standing by her side. There was a look upon the face of the man who had once been so dear to her that she did not like. It was a threatening look. She had never seen Allyne Strathroy look so before. Her heart told her that the interview that she so dreaded was at hand, and the strange expression upon Allyne's face told her also that it would be far from being a pleasant one. "I did not hear you come in," she said, looking up in his face. "Am I less welcome on that account?" he asked, leaning on the back of the cushioned arm-chair in which she sat, and looking down into her face with a gleam in his eyes that chilled her to the heart, although his glance was one of fire. "No, of course not," she replied, answering the odd question that he had asked. "Blanche, what were you thinking of when I entered the room?" he said. "Why—of—of a great many things," she replied, with hesitation. "Why do you ask?" "Because, from the expression upon your face when I came in, I should judge that your thoughts were not pleasant ones." Blanche could not understand the strange feeling that came over her now in Allyne Strathroy's presence. His voice—the voice whose rich tones were once so pleasant to her ear—now filled her soul with a strange apprehension of danger. She could assign no reason for this change. She could only feel it, without being able to explain why or wherefore. "How strangely you speak, Allyne," she said, after a few minutes of silence, feeling that she should say something. "I do not speak as strangely as you act, Blanche," he replied.

The painful interview was coming, and yet now that she could not avoid it, her heart sunk within her and she would have given almost any thing to escape, and this, too, after bravely making up her mind to encounter it. "Blanche," he continued, finding that she did not reply, "I have seen Mr. Chubbet, your guardian. He told me the particulars of an interview between you and himself this morning. I would not have believed such an interview could have taken place, had I not his word for it. Blanche, what have I ever done to you that you should break your faith with me?" The tone of Allyne was deep and strong, but more full of angry passion than of sorrowful emotion. "Nothing," the word came slowly from the lips of the fair girl, who bent her head and did not, seemingly, dare to encounter the look of the young man. "Ah, nothing," he repeated; "and for nothing you break your word! You plunge me down into utter misery. You take away from me all that makes life joyful—yourself, and all for nothing. Bitter indeed was his tone. "Blanche, I thought better of you. I did not think that you would treat me this way. If you could give me a reason for this sudden change, I should not blame you so much. But you have no reason." "Yes, yes, I have!" she exclaimed, feeling that his words were unjust. "And what is that reason?" he demanded, earnestly looking into her face, which now was uplifted to meet his eyes. "I do not love you!" she answered, firmly. "You have never loved me," he cried, in heat. "Allyne, you do not speak the truth," she exclaimed, all the woman in her nature roused by his words. "You know that I have loved you, and if I love you no longer, it is your fault and not mine." "What do you mean?" asked the young man, a frown clouding up his brow. "That you have changed," replied the girl, firmly. "You are not the Allyne that I gave my love to. You have deceived me, and now that I have discovered the truth, which is best—to confess it frankly as I have confessed, or to deceive you with a lie? To say that I love you with my lips, when in my heart I fear you?" "You fear me?" said Allyne, apparently astounded by her words. "What have I ever done that you should fear me?" "I can not tell," said Blanche, in despair; "that is why I am so miserable. My heart tells me that I fear you, and yet I can not give a reason for it." "This is but a girlish fancy!" exclaimed Strathroy. "No, no, Allyne, it is not!" cried Blanche, while, in spite of her efforts, the tears came slowly into her eyes. "Oh, Allyne, do not blame me for acting as I have, rather pity me; for, oh! you can not guess how wretched this knowledge has made me. Only one little week ago, I looked forward to the day when I should call you husband, with ea-

gerness and joy. But now, I would rather go into my grave than be your wife." The poor girl showed her distress plainly, both in her face and voice, and yet Allyne Strathroy did not seem to be affected by it. "Blanche, you are a foolish child," he said, impatiently. "You have allowed a wicked fancy to sway your better judgment. You will change again, possibly, as suddenly and with as little reason as you have changed this time. Then you will beg me to forget this scene; to forget your foolish words." "No, Allyne," answered Blanche, decidedly. "I am not acting foolishly, nor am I yielding to any sudden fancy. At first I thought it was a fancy and strove to cast it off, but the effort was useless. I can not give a reason for acting this way, it is true; neither can I give a reason for shrinking when I see a snake; it is but fear—instinctive fear." "And you have the same fear of me that you have of a snake?" he asked, with bitterness in his voice. "Not exactly the same, of course," she replied, "but it is like that feeling. I can not explain it any better, but I shrink from you without knowing why." "So you would have all at an end between us?" he asked. "Yes," she replied, firmly. "All at an end between us. I have told you the reasons as well as I can, that urges me to this step, and Allyne, do not think harshly of me for the parting gives me as much pain as it can possibly give you." "I should be very foolish indeed if I allowed you to persevere in this foolish whim," said the young man, firmly. "Why, Allyne, what do you mean?" asked Blanche, in wonder. "Simply that, if for the moment you are mad, I am not," replied Strathroy. "Oh, Allyne, do not speak so cruelly!" cried Blanche, in anguish. "Blanche, you have given me your promise to become my wife, have you not?" demanded Strathroy. "Yes," replied Blanche, unable as yet to guess the drift of the question. "And you wish to be released from that promise?" "Yes; it is my duty, now that I know the truth, to ask for that release." "Blanche, you are my promised wife, and while I live, I will never release you," Allyne Strathroy spoke firmly. "But, Allyne, you can not mean," cried Blanche, in wonder. "To hold you to your promise? But I do, though. I will not let you make wretched both your own life and mine by this thoughtless act," replied Allyne. "And you are willing to marry a woman who tells you that she can not love you?" questioned Blanche, a red flush sweeping over her face. "Yes," said Allyne, firmly. "Who tells you that she fears you almost as she fears a serpent?" "Yes," again repeated Strathroy. "Allyne Strathroy, you have changed indeed." Blanche could hardly believe what she had heard.

"Yes, I have changed, and you are the cause of that change. Blanche, I will never resign you." "Allyne, I never expected to hear you speak like this. You are not the Allyne I loved, and I will never be your wife of my own free will. Let me pass." Then, with a queenly step, she left the room. Allyne did not offer to detain her. "Blanche, you can not escape me!" he said, fiercely, sinking into a chair with an angry glare in his dark eyes.

CHAPTER XV.

ON THE TRAIL.

"She is fully in my power," mused Allyne, as he took the seat by the window wherein Blanche had sat. "How can she escape me? The five thousand dollars will make old Chubbet do my will. I read his character at the first glance—the infernal old scoundrel. If he can not persuade or force Blanche to become my wife, some other means must be used. And what other means can be used?" For a moment Allyne pondered over the question. "I have it!" he exclaimed, at last. "I can find a minister somewhere, who, for a good round sum, will not be particular whether the young lady says 'yes' or 'no' when we stand up before him. I will make the girl mine if I am sure of sinking to hell's fires the moment afterward!"

Then Allyne thought over the interview that had taken place between Blanche and himself.

There seems to be a special Providence in this strange dislike that the girl has taken to me," he muttered; "she can not understand the reason, but I can, though, and I do not wonder at it. Some persons laugh at presentiments; I do not. I am convinced that there is something within our natures—some mysterious and unknown power, that the eye of science has not yet reached or even guessed at—that warns us, of coming evil. This girl, hates me, whom she used to love, warned by that mysterious power. I hate this man—this outcast wretch, whose name even I do not know—but whom I feel—warned by this same power—is either destined to kill me or to ruin me. Once already I have failed. And now how can I discover him, discover where he has his den, that again I may seek and strike him—again stain my hand scarlet in blood?" A ring of the door-bell interrupted Allyne's meditations. Glancing through the window, which commanded a view of the front steps, he saw a tall figure dressed in black standing there. The figure was not familiar to the young man.

"What does he want, I wonder?" he said to himself. A few moments after one of the servants, who had answered the bell, came into the room.

"What is it, Williams?" Allyne asked. "It's an old gentleman, sir—who says he used to know your father—would like to see you, if you are disengaged," said the servant.

"Show him in here; I'll see him." Allyne Strathroy had a strange curiosity regarding the father that had so mysteriously disappeared twenty-two years before.

The servant conducted the gentleman into the parlor.

Allyne beheld a man, apparently about sixty years of age, clad in an old-fashioned black suit. His hair was iron-gray and cut quite close to the head. His face was smooth-shaven, and was lit up by a pair of keen, grayish-black eyes.

The moment Allyne beheld him, he was seized with the impression that he had seen the man somewhere before, but where or when he could not remember, although he racked his brains to do so.

"Mr. Allyne Strathroy, I presume, sir," said the stranger, after the servant had left the room.

Allyne gave a slight start when the tones of the stranger's voice fell upon his hearing. The voice, too, was familiar. The circumstances puzzled the young man. The keen eyes of the stranger noticed the movement on the part of Allyne, slight as it was.

There was nothing in the stranger's voice to excite attention. He spoke in a low, monotonous tone, with a slight degree of harshness—such a voice as might belong to either a country schoolmaster or minister.

"Yes, sir," replied Allyne. "I am Allyne Strathroy."

"I am truly proud to make your acquaintance, sir," said the stranger, with an angular bow. "Allow me to introduce myself, Obadiah Howard, from Unionville, Cattaraugus county, New York."

"I am pleased to see you, Mr. Howard; be seated," said Allyne, as the stranger, who was seated, said to him, "You are extremely good, and Mr. Howard sat down."

"I think you mentioned that you were acquainted with my father," the young man said.

"Yes, I have that honor, and how is your worthy father?" the stranger asked.

Allyne started in astonishment. "How? Is it possible that you do not know that my father disappeared some twenty-two years ago, and has never been heard of since?" asked Allyne.

"Oh, I do remember, 'pears to me," said the stranger, in some little confusion. "The fact is, Mr. Strathroy, I have not seen your father for nigh onto twenty-five years. He was up our way one summer and he stopped a spell at our house, and invited me to call upon him if I ever came to New York; and so, as I got down here now, I thought I'd just drop in and return the visit."

There was something so ludicrous in the idea of a man letting twenty-five years elapse, before returning a call that Allyne could hardly help smiling.

"I was a teaching school when your father was up our way; but now I'm an editor. Editor of the Unionville Bugle. I've come down to New York for to make a book. I'm going to show up this awful city, as it ought to be shown up, sir, in all its wickedness and sin. And, sir, I thought, considering that I knew your father, that perhaps you wouldn't mind to assist me a little in my object."

Allyne had anticipated that the old friend of his father would want assistance.

"Well, Mr. Howard, I don't really know how I can be of any service to you," Allyne said.

"I will explain, sir," said the editor. "In my book, which I am a-going to bring out, I intend to tell the truth about the sin and iniquity of this modern Sodom; and I reasonably suppose, sir, that people will not be apt to believe, sir, that I have really been here, and seen with my own eyes what I am a-going to write about. So I have prepared a little certificate which I intend to publish as a sort of an introduction to my book; proving that I have composed my book on the spot here, sir, right in the midst of all the wickedness that I am a-going to write about."

Then Mr. Howard drew a sheet of paper from his pocket-book, and read aloud:

"New York City. We, the undersigned, hereby certify that we have seen Mr. Obadiah Howard, editor of the Weekly Unionville Bugle, Cattaraugus County, State of New York, in our city, collecting materials for his book upon the great metropolis of America as it is."

"There, sir," said Mr. Howard, after he had finished reading; "if you will give me your signature at the bottom of this, I shall think it a great favor, sir. I intend to get the signatures of the chief of police, the mayor of the city, and other men in high offices, but I thought that I would fare better with them if I got some one who knew me to sign it first."

"Oh, certainly. I have no objection to sign it," said Allyne, glad to get rid of his tiresome visitor in so easy a manner.

So Allyne rung for pen and ink. But, as the young man put his hand upon the pen to sign, a sudden thought seemed to strike him. For a moment he looked suspiciously at the editor, Mr. Howard; but that gentleman was caressing his chin, seeming in great delight at having succeeded so well in his mission.

"Pshaw! I'm a fool," muttered Allyne to himself as he commenced to sign.

The young man wrote his signature on the page slowly, and evidently with difficulty.

"I sprained my wrist a few nights ago," he explained, "and it is difficult for me to hold a pen, much less write with my accustomed ease."

The keen eyes of Mr. Obadiah Howard had flashed fire under their long lashes, when they beheld the apparently stiff hand of the young man trace "Allyne Strathroy" across the page. It was with delight no doubt at having succeeded.

"I am very much obliged," said the editor, carefully restoring the paper to his pocket-book.

"Oh, don't mention it."

The editor rose to depart.

This is a great city," he said, in a mournful voice. "The things they do here, are awful. The other day, a gathering materials for my book, I walked into a house which had a crowd around it, and I found there a man stabbed right through the heart, and nobody knew who did it."

"Yes, such things are common in our city," said Allyne.

Mr. Howard had reached the door, but turned as he opened it.

"Yes, they are very common. This was a young man, too—a good-looking young man; he favored you a little, except that he had a mustache. The officer, said his name was James Kidd."

For a moment Allyne reeled like a drunken man—the room swam around him. The editor apparently did not notice the young man's agitation, though looking straight at him with his keen eyes.

"It is a wicked city," said the editor, solemnly; then he added: "I am very much obliged, and took his departure."

"Curse the fellow!" cried Allyne, hoarsely; "it came so sudden that it took my breath away. I must be careful or I shall betray myself."

But Allyne Strathroy had no suspicions that Mr. Obadiah Howard was aught else than he represented himself to be.

But a few days afterward, being downtown, Allyne stopped into the banking-house where he kept his funds. Then, as a good joke, the cashier told him of a queer old fellow, who had said he was an autograph collector from Riverhead, Long Island, and who desired, if possible, to obtain the autograph of Mr. Allyne Strathroy, as he understood that it strongly resembled the signature of George Washington. And the cashier further told how he had hunted up an old letter of Allyne Strathroy's, which was on file, and given the signature to the odd old man.

Allyne Strathroy laughed at the strange idea, but there was no laughter in his heart. He felt that he was in danger. Some invisible foe was weaving a web around him. The meshes might close upon him at any time. He saw plainly that Obadiah Howard and the autograph collector was one and the same. Some one had guessed his secret and was preparing to strike him.

All looked dark for Allyne Strathroy, but in the darkness came one gleam of light.

Happening to step into one of the Broadway theaters to while away a few moments, he was overjoyed to recognize upon the stage, in the leading player, Edmund Mor-

daunt, the outcast actor—the man that he feared so much.

"At last I know him," Allyne muttered. "If he escapes me now, it is because it is fated that I shall perish by his hand, and not he by mine."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SLASHER MAKES A MORNING CALL.
It was the morning after the night when Allyne Strathroy had made the discovery that Edmund Mordaunt was the name of the vagabond player that he feared so much, and that apparently without any reason, that an omnibus rolling up Madison avenue stopped at Twenty-third street and deposited Mr. John Duke, the notorious Slasher, upon the curbstone.

The Slasher was habited in his best attire; in fact, he looked quite the gentleman, excepting that the checks on his trousers were a little too large, and the dogs' heads on his velvet vest a little too flashy. To speak plainly, Duke's "get-up" came under the head of "loud." Not that the Slasher had any such idea, for he glanced at himself with an air of complacency that showed plainly that he was perfectly satisfied with his personal appearance.

"I rather think this is the sort of thing," he said, as he walked slowly down the street, heading toward Fifth avenue. "Blest if I don't look like a 'blood' all over." This rig is just stunnin'. I s'pect the young sport will be rather astonished at a call from John Duke, Esquire, as he don't happen to have the pleasure of my acquaintance. But, I think that, before I've been in his shanty long, we'll be thick as thieves."

As the reader has doubtless surmised from the musings of the Slasher, that worthy was on his way to pay a morning call to Allyne Strathroy.

The Slasher turned into Fifth avenue, and as he did so, he took from his pocket the letter that the man who had been so mysteriously murdered—James Kidd—had written to Allyne Strathroy, and which he, the Slasher, had picked up from beneath the table in the room of the murdered man, on the morning when he had discovered the body.

The Slasher read the address on the envelop. Then he glanced at the number upon the house by which he stood, and it was on the other side of the street, and I guess on the next block," he muttered. "I might as well cross over now." So over the street went the Slasher.

"Let me see," he mused, as he walked along. "Let me fix the 'state'—prepare the programme. This letter that I found in the room is pretty good proof that this Allyne Strathroy was there on the night of the murder. S'pose I make a bold dash at it, an' swear to him that I saw him go into the house? How's that for high?"

The Slasher chuckled over the idea. "If he's the man that give Jimmy Kidd that wipe with the long knife, why, when I make the charge, he'll be apt to knuckle an' 'see me' for to hold my tongue. If he ain't the man, and is innocent of the murder, why he'll deny it, an' I've made a mistake, that's all. But I feel pretty sure he is the man. But what did he want to kill Jimmy for? That's what I can't understand. There's a mystery about it."

By the time that Duke had arrived at this conclusion, he had reached the house of Allyne Strathroy. His eyes fell upon the door-plate bearing the young man's name.

"Here's my bird," he said, with a chuckle, as he ascended the steps and gave the bell a lusty pull. Now I'll try for to 'see if I can't put some salt onto his tail. If he's my man, I'll let him down easy; 'bout two thousand a year, that will be a tidy salary. I couldn't steal much more nor that if I was to run for an office an' get elected."

Then the door opening, out short Duke's meditations.

"Is Mister Allyne Strathroy in, young feller?" The Slasher wished to impress the servant with the idea that he was a swell of the first water.

"Yes," said the servant, shortly, not relishing the familiar style of the address.

"Well, just you trot off an' tell him that a gent wishes to see him on particular business," said Duke, loftily.

"Are you the gent?" asked the servant, superciliously.

"You can go your pile on that, young feller," said the Slasher, with a wink.

"Your card, sir," and the servant extended his hand.

"My what?" asked the Slasher, beginning to be a little wrathful.

"Your card, of course—your name," explained the servant, with an air of dignity.

"What do you want my name for?" demanded the Slasher, who was not over-patient by nature, and whose choler was rising at this sort of treatment.

"So I can take it in to my master, then he'll know whether he'll see you, or not."

The footman was very unfavorably impressed by the Slasher's manner, and had set him down as a low fellow at first sight.

"Well, my name won't be of any use, 'cos your master don't know me. Just you tell him it's a gent on particular business."

Mr. Allyne Strathroy don't see gents as can't send in their names," said the servant, shortly; and he attempted to shut the door in the Slasher's face; but that worthy was too quick for him; for, putting his broad shoulders against the door, he pushed it open and sent the servant reeling back into the entry.

"You just try that on ag'in an' I'll hit you right in the snoot," said the Slasher, doubling up his huge fist, and advancing upon the terrified servant.

"What is the matter, Williams?" said Allyne Strathroy, speaking from the head of the stairs, whither he had been attracted by the noise in the entry.

As the sound of Allyne's voice fell upon the ears of the Slasher, he started slightly, and a puzzled expression came over his face.

"Why, I've met this chap, somewhere," he muttered, "cos I've heard that voice before."

"It's a man insists upon seeing you, sir, and he won't give his name," said the servant, retreating out of the reach of the Slasher's muscular arm.

"Say a gent, you foo-foo you!" growled the Slasher, in an undertone. The servant retreated still further along the entry.

"To see me," said Allyne, beginning to descend the stairs. Half-way down he saw the Slasher's face, and for a moment paused on the stairway, while a strange, peculiar wrinkle came between his eyes. Then again he slowly descended the stairs.

The Slasher, looking up, saw the face of the young man.

"Blest if I ain't seen him somewhere, too," the rough muttered.

"Do you wish to see me, sir?" asked Allyne, speaking in quite a low and apparently guarded tone.

"Yes, if you are Mr. Allyne Strathroy," said the Slasher, who was sorely puzzled, for when he heard the young man speak at the head of the stairs, he could have sworn that he knew the voice; but now, the voice seemed utterly strange to him. But the face still was familiar. The Slasher knew that somewhere, before, he had seen a face that looked like the face of the young man.

"Well, sir, what is your business with me?" Allyne asked. He, like the servant, was evidently not favorably impressed with the appearance of Mr. John Duke.

"My business is particular and private," said the Slasher, doggedly. "I can't tell you here in the entry with that cuss a-listening. You kin hear me or not, just as you likes, I ain't particular. But if you don't want to see me, why I've got a little note here, addressed by Mr. James Kidd to a young gent as lives in this neighborhood, an' I'll call upon the nearest police justice an' ask him what I ought to do about it."

The Slasher's tone was loud and defiant. "You need not make so much noise, my friend," said Allyne, coolly.

The Slasher was astonished. He had expected that, at the very mention of the name of James Kidd, Allyne Strathroy would almost have gone down on his knees before him and begged him to keep silent. But the young man was perfectly cool and showed no symptoms of alarm whatever. The Slasher began to have an impression that perhaps he was not going to have as easy a task as he had anticipated in bringing Allyne Strathroy to terms.

"Well, you wanted to know my business, and now you knows it," returned the rough.

"If you will walk up-stairs to my library I will listen to what you have to say, although I am not in the habit of granting interviews to strangers," said Allyne, in the same cool tone that he had previously used.

"All right. I'm agreeable," replied Duke, and then he followed the young man up-stairs.

He's a cool hand," muttered the Slasher; "it's goin' to be a more difficult job than I thought. But I'll go for him lively, though."

Allyne conducted his strange-looking visitor to his library.

They entered and Allyne closed the door. "Now, sir, your business?" Allyne asked.

"No danger of being overheard here?" the Slasher said, mysteriously.

"I think not; none of my household are in the habit of playing the eavesdropper, that I am aware of," said the young man, haughtily.

"Well, we can't be too careful, you know, Mr. Strathroy," observed the Slasher. "Walls, you know, have ears sometimes."

"I do not think that you will find that to be the case here," returned Allyne, coldly.

"There's no tellin'." I alters like to be on the safe side. Why, I knowed a feller as went up the river for five years 'cos he happened to speak a trifle loud in an oyster saloon, an' a detective heard him," said Duke, sagaciously.

"I do not understand the necessity of all this precaution, sir," said Strathroy, impatiently.

"Oh, don't yer?" questioned the rough. "Well, you will in a little while. First an' foremost then, did you ever know a man called James Kidd?"

And as the rough put the question he looked eagerly into the face of the young man, expecting to behold there some trace of emotion when the name of Kidd fell upon his ears. But the Slasher was disappointed. Not a muscle of Strathroy's face moved. It was as stolid as though carved out of marble. The Slasher's first shot had evidently gone wide of the mark.

"I do not remember to have ever known a man by that name," replied Allyne.

"He was murdered in Baxter street, only

a little while ago," said Duke, thinking that this shot would hit if the first had failed.

"I have neither friends nor acquaintances who reside in the neighborhood of Baxter street to my knowledge," said Allyne, a slight sneer curling the corners of his mouth.

"No, that ain't improbable 'bout the friends, but you might have had an enemy there," said the Slasher, significantly, and a cunning leer came over his face as he spoke.

"What do you mean?" asked Strathroy. "That I accuse you of having murdered James Kidd?" said the Slasher, defiantly.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SLASHER "SLASHED."

FOR A MOMENT Allyne Strathroy looked at the Slasher with a face as calm as a summer sea.

"Will you be so obliging as to repeat that last remark of yours?" he asked, in a cool, unruffled tone, that showed no trace of emotion.

"Didn't I speak plain enough?" demanded the rough, in an ugly way. "I said that I, John Duke, accuse you of the murder of James Kidd, and now what have you got to say to it?"

"What have I to say to it?" said the young man, a quiet smile upon his face. "Why, all I have to say to it is to ask you if you are drunk or crazy?"

"You'll find out if I'm drunk or crazy when you're behind the prison-bars, my gay young blood," cried the Slasher, in a rage.

"And who is going to put me there?" "I am."

"Oh, you are!" And then again Allyne favored the rough with a look which the latter didn't like at all.

"Yes, I am," returned the Slasher, doggedly; "that is, I will unless you are reasonable an' do what's right."

"Do what is right?" said the young man, repeating the words as if unable to guess their meaning.

"Yes," said the Slasher; "I don't bear you any malice 'bout the affair, though Jimmy was an old pard of mine."

"Jimmy?"

"Yes; the man you killed—stabbed to the heart."

"I beg your pardon. Allow me to correct you in one little particular: not, 'the man that I killed,' but the man that you say I killed," said Allyne, quietly.

"Well, I kin prove, it too!" exclaimed the Slasher, defiantly.

"Oh, you can?"

"Yes, unless you 'come down'."

"That is, you mean unless I pay you to keep silence?" said Allyne.

"Yes, that's just what I mean," replied the Slasher.

"It is a case of blackmail, then?"

"You kin call it what you like," said the rough, sullenly; "but unless you 'come down' with the rocks, I goes straight from here to the nearest police justice, and I gets out a warrant for your arrest."

"Oh, you do?"

"Yes, I do!" cried Duke, enraged at the cool tone of the man whom he had confidently expected would go down on his knees before him and beg for mercy when he charged him with his crime.

"To get out a warrant it is necessary to be able to swear to something. Now, what can you swear to, to connect me with this murder that you speak of?" asked Allyne, coolly.

"Do you see this letter?" and Duke held up the letter that he had found under the table, and which we have spoken of before.

"Yes, I see it," said Allyne, without betraying any emotion.

"This letter was written," by James Kidd to Allyne Strathroy—you see the address?"

"And how comes that letter in your hands?" sternly asked Allyne.

The Slasher looked at him for a moment in blank amazement.

"Well, you are a cool hand," he said, at length. "How does it come in my hands? I'll tell you. The Slasher felt that he was about to run the chase to earth. "This letter is an appointment for you to come to No. 52 Baxter street on a certain night. You went to the house and you dropped this letter there. I found it under the table the next morning, at the same time that I discovered the dead body of Kidd, the man killed by you. This letter proves that you were in the house the night that he was murdered. 'Taint much evidence I know, but I guess it's enough to start on, an' a trial will probably fetch out the reason why you did kill him."

"You have no proof that Allyne Strathroy ever received that letter," said Allyne, thoughtfully.

"Oh, hain't I?" said the Slasher, with a grin. "It was sent through the post-office; the canceled stamp proves the delivery, and if that don't, the carrier will."

"You say that letter was written to Allyne Strathroy by Kidd?"

"Yes."

"Yet it is signed Williams?"

"Oh, you know that? Then of course you did receive the letter?"

"I do not say that I did."

"Well, as to Kidd's writing it, I can swear to his handwriting," said the Slasher.

"You are a liar!" cried Allyne, hastily.

"What!" yelled the Slasher, raising his

arm in rage and advancing toward the young man; but quick as the flash of the lightning, Allyne struck the rough with all the force of his powerful arm. It was a flush hit in the throat, just under the right ear. It was a terrible blow, lifting the muscular Slasher from off his feet as though he had been but a child, and hurling him, stunned and almost lifeless, into a corner of the room, where he sunk down, all in a heap.

The precious letter escaped from his nerveless grip and fell upon the carpet.

With a look of triumph Allyne picked it up.

There was a little fire burning in the grate in the room.

Allyne held the letter in the blaze, and in a few seconds the paper was ashes. All proof that he had been in Kidd's room on the night of the murder was destroyed. Allyne, so far, had beaten the rough.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 20.)

The Masked Miner:

OR, THE IRON-MERCHANT'S DAUGHTER.

A TALE OF PITTSBURGH.

BY WM. MASON TURNER.

AUTHOR OF "UNDER BAIL," "SILKEN CORD," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

OLD LANDMARKS.

WHEN the new-comer had alighted from the car he passed quickly through the extensive depot, and, reaching the street, paused a moment and gazed about him. Noticing that several persons were eying him closely, he turned away at once to the Monongahela House omnibus, which was in waiting. Depositing several baggage-checks in the hands of the driver, he wrapped his cloak around him, and shrunk away in his seat as if disliking observation.

There were a large number of passengers by this train, and the omnibus was kept waiting for a considerable length of time.

Opposite the stranger, two gentlemen—apparently citizens of the place, and who had evidently gotten in to ride down-town—had just entered and seated themselves. A remark from one of them made the new-comer start, and hastily turn his head. But he instantly checked himself without creating observation, and nestled back still further in his seat. His ears were open, however.

"Yes, you are right," said one of the gentlemen; "it's a strange piece of work."

"Fairleigh Somerville is a wide-awake man," answered the other who had first spoken. "He has made his way up rapidly. But I would have never dreamed he held claims against poor old Harley to such an amount."

"Nor I; and it is really true that he has taken possession of the fine mansion this very day."

"Yes, I was by there this morning. Somerville is a man of the world, and I fear has but little heart. He turned the old man and his daughter out into the street! I saw the girl leading her poor old father off."

"Sorry indeed; but Mr. Harley was very unwise in his speculations. Where are they now?"

"I don't know exactly, but I think they are in one of his old tenement-houses on the Common."

"Well, strange things often happen!" said the other, after a pause. "Four years ago Richard Harley was reputed one of the wealthiest men in Allegheny city; now, he is worse than bankrupt, if report be true; he is in absolute want!"

"Yes; and the strangest part of the affair is, that the man who has legally, of course, ousted him from the mansion, was, two years ago, a suitor for the hand of poor Grace, and I much fear that, in return for her evident dislike of him, he has wreaked a revenge by involving the old man."

Just then the omnibus, having received its load, rattled off, and the conversation ceased.

The stranger had sat like a statue; he had heard every word.

The hotel was soon reached.

The name written by this conspicuous-looking person on the books at the Monongahela House, and which may still be seen by the curious, was:

"FELIX MORTON,"

But the name stood alone; it was not followed by residence. At tea, Mr. Morton descended from his room, partook lightly and hastily of the meal, and, arising from the table, put on his overcoat, and left the hotel. He seemed a little nervous, but no one noticed it.

On leaving the hotel the gentleman walked down Water street to Wood. He pursued his way along this thoroughfare until he reached Fifth avenue. Turning abruptly down this, and as if thoroughly familiar with the city, he hurried on toward the river. Crossing the Allegheny on the Suspension bridge, he walked straight on up Federal street, to Stockton avenue. There he paused.

The temps were now like for night had settled down. Feeling in his pocket, the white-bearded, stalwart stranger drew out a letter or a memorandum-slip.

"'Tis all right," he muttered. "I must see if this fearful tale be true! I must go on, for Tom's sake!"

Turning into Stockton avenue, he started forward again. Finally he reached the

Harley mansion. He halted at the iron gate; then, suddenly entering, he approached the great hall-door to read by the glaring street-lamp, on a new, glittering door-plate, the name:

"FAIRLEIGH SOMERVILLE."

The stranger turned as if to retreat, while a deathly pallor spread over his face.

"My God! so soon!" he muttered. "Then 'tis true! Alas! alas! and yet—"

He paused, and as if impelled by frenzy, faced about again and pulled the bell with a steady hand.

In a moment the door was opened, and a pompous servant in livery stood there.

"Does Mr. Richard Harley live here?" "Richard Harley! No, indeed," said the domestic, somewhat superciliously; "though he slept here no longer ago than last night!" and the man smiled scornfully.

"Ah! And where, then, does the old gentleman live?" asked the stranger.

"Can't exactly say; we know very little about them; but the old man lives somewhere on Cedar avenue, I think—'other side of the Common.'"

"Ah! Yes, and—" he slipped some coins as he spoke into the man's hand, "and is his daughter, Miss Grace Harley, still with her father?"

"Yes, sir; she has nowhere else to go. But, sir," and the man who had readily unbent his dignity, sunk his voice familiarly, "people do say that the girl is crazy—stark mad, and has been for many a day, all about a venturesome rascal by the name of Tom Worth, a miner that was, who stole her away once, and who, having broke jail, was drowned trying to get away."

"Ah! you surprise me. And—"

But, just then the tall, slender form of Somerville entered the brilliantly-lit hallway from the supper-room. His face as it showed in the bright light was flushed with a triumphant glow—maybe with wine.

The stranger drew back in the shade, and, saying, curtly, "Thank you, my man," turned upon his heel and entered the street again.

An hour from that time, a low but decided rap sounded on the door of old Ben Walford's cabin, over on the cliff. The summons was promptly answered by the old man. When he had opened the door, the tall, aristocratic stranger entered.

Old Ben gazed earnestly and wonderingly at him.

CHAPTER XXVI.

NEWS FOR OLD BEN.

"DOES Ben Walford live here?" asked the stranger, in a deep voice.

Old Ben still gazed at him.

The lapse of two years had not made much change in the appearance of the old man. The same long iron-gray hair fell over his jacket-collar; the same good-natured, independent look sat on his aged-seamed face; the same Herculean muscles swelled on his arms as he flew and extended those members in stroking his chin. He was the same honest old Ben, the miner; but a shade of more than usual sadness clouded his face.

He bowed respectfully to the imposing-looking stranger, and said:

"Yes, sir, old Ben Walford lives here, and he is not ashamed of his name—why, I am the man."

A smile spread over the face of the gentleman as he looked full into the honest countenance of the other. Then he suddenly strode forward, and, much to the old man's astonishment, caught his hand, horny hand in his own soft but firm grip.

"Then, my dear sir," he exclaimed, "I am glad to see you. I feel like I have known you for years."

"Me, sir? Asking your pardon, sir, I am only a miner—a poor man—but, thus far, an honest one. And, sir, never to my knowledge have I seen your face before."

But the old miner took the proffered hand honestly and cordially.

"That may be, my good sir," replied the stranger, smiling; "but, I have heard your name so often on the lips of one well-known—in fact, very dear—to me, and from him, so much that was good and noble of you, that I feel like I know you. My name is Morton, Felix Morton, and, sir, I—"

"Glad to see you, Mr. Morton; and, though wondering, of course, yet, sir, who was it that spoke so well of old Ben?" and the old man gazed his visitor keenly in the face.

The stranger hesitated, and cast his eyes down ere he spoke. A slight tremor passed over his frame; but, when he raised his head again, his eyes were bright, and his voice steady as he said:

"Why, you knew him well; his name—Tom Worth, and—"

"Tom Worth! You bring me news, sir! and old Ben started as if stricken with a rifle-ball. "And, sir, what of Tom Worth? What tidings of my boy, as I always called him? God bless him!"

The old miner dashed a quick, unbidden tear from his eye.

Sudden as a lightning-stroke, a moisture dimmed the large, lustrous orbs of the stranger, and he turned his head hastily aside.

"Come, come in, Mr. Morton; I forgot myself, sir! at the mention of Tom's name. Come in, sir; though my cabin is an humble place for such as you, and he glanced at his guest again, "yet, if you know Tom, sir, you must be a good man, and one not ashamed of honest poor folks, for such was my boy."



The stranger walked in at once, and seated himself on one of the rude chairs of the cabin.

"Thank you kindly," he said. "I promised Tom to call and see you. He sent several messages by me to Pittsburgh—among them one to you—and here I am. I only arrived two hours since."

"May God bless you, sir, for your kindness! And was Tom well, sir? Was he still mindful of old Ben? And where was he, sir, when he gave you the message for me?"

The stranger started, but, after a moment's hesitation, replied:

"Tom was well, and always spoke of you with the warmest affection. When I saw him, some months ago, he was far away from this! But, Tom has been fortunate, since he was here."

"Fortunate? And how, sir? I know he had good luck in some things, but to what do you refer?"

"He has had a great deal of money left him," replied the stranger, quietly, glancing at the old man.

"I'm glad, indeed, to hear it, sir!" said Ben, promptly; "for, if ever man deserved the smiles of heaven, Tom Worth was that man! To tell you the truth, Mr. Morton," and he drew his chair confidentially toward the richly-clad gentleman, "there was something strange about Tom—that boy of mine. He was wonderful book-learned, sir, and though he had thews of steel and muscles of iron, and a fist that could shiver an inch-thick oak plank, yet that hand, though he worked in the mine, was always so white, so fine, so like a gentleman's, sir, that I often thought, though I didn't say it, that Tom was not exactly what he seemed to be. And, then, Mr. Morton, Tom was so gentle, so respectful, sir, to the women. And I tell you, sir, that such a man is a true man, and one as don't forget he has had a mother, sir."

The stranger listened intently, his eyes fixed on the old man's face—those eyes wet still.

"You speak words of wisdom, my friend," he said, in a low voice, one deeply enthusiastic from emotion, "and you are right—such men are true men."

"Yes, Mr. Morton; and Tom Worth was one of them! And then, too, in a rough-and-tumble, my stars, sir! he was a perfect lion, and— But do you know his story, sir? He had a little trouble hereabouts!"

The old man spoke cautiously.

"Yes," replied the stranger; "I know Tom Worth's story, every word, and I know, too, that Tom was innocent."

"Innocent? Of course he was! And he would be a brave man, as I have said more than once, who would contradict me! Though—though—truth be told, for a long time, Tom himself would not say whether or not he was."

"Perhaps he had his reasons," suggested Mr. Morton, softly.

"Of course, sir, of course!" was the reply. "That was Tom! Reasons for every thing, and good ones! God be thanked that I have heard from him again!"

A silence of some minutes ensued, the stranger bending his head in thought, old Ben sitting with his eyes half closed, a pleasant smile spreading over his countenance, as his mind, doubtless, was traveling back over the past. The old man was thinking of Tom Worth, and the other was thinking of—what?

Suddenly the old man broke the silence by saying:

"You have brought me news, Mr. Morton—good, glorious news for me, and the same for another!" and he glanced familiarly at the stranger, as if courting a confidence.

Mr. Morton started; his face flushed slightly, and his mustached lip trembled. But he asked, quietly:

"What do you mean, Mr. Walford?"

"Why, sir, there can be no harm in telling you, for you are Tom's friend. Why, sir, Tom was a handsome lad, and he had, truth be told, a wondrous way with the women. And, sir—why, Tom was in love, and in love with a rich man's daughter."

The old man paused.

Mr. Morton drew still nearer to the miner, his gaze fixed upon him earnestly, expectantly.

"Well, Mr. Walford?"

"And, sir, the girl—God bless her for a noble woman—loved Tom more than any plain, blunt words of mine can tell you, sir. And she would have married Tom in spite of every thing had my boy stayed; but, poor thing—"

Again the old man paused.

Mr. Morton was now showing signs of excitement. He placed his hand upon the old man's arm, and said, in a deep whisper: "Yes, yes, Mr. Walford; what of this poor girl, who loved the humble Tom Worth of those days?"

"Why, sir, poor thing, she has almost grieved herself to death after him. In spite of all I could say and swear to her, she believes Tom is dead—was drowned, sir. Why—would you believe it—she has been wearing black for Tom for these two years past! Don't that show love, sir? Again I say, may God bless that woman!"

"Amen!" echoed Mr. Morton, and a tear dimmed his eye; nor did the turning of his head conceal his emotion from old Ben.

"And now, sir, the other part of your good news," said the miner, softly, "is that I can tell Miss Grace positively that Tom

is not dead, and that perhaps, nay I know it, sir! that, though he is rich now, yet he is true to her still!"

"Ay, my friend! True to the death!" said the stranger, somewhat vehemently—so much so, indeed, that old Ben glanced at him quickly.

"But," continued Mr. Morton, as he saw the effect of his words, "it will not do now to tell this young lady of me. We will wait; I have my reasons."

"Of course, sir, of course. And I am so glad to hear from Tom; I'd almost be willing to die without ever seeing old England if my eyes could fall on Tom. God grant it!"

"You may see him yet, Mr. Walford; who knows?" said the stranger, quickly. "But," he continued, as if recollecting himself, "I have with me a letter from Tom for you. Here it is," and he drew it from his pocket and handed it over.

The old man took it with an air almost reverential; fondled it for a moment in his large hands, and gazed affectionately at the superscription.

"Yes, 'tis from Tom!" he muttered; "I know his writing—so clear, so strong and fine, like printing! But, sir, my old eyes are dim; read that letter for me. I would not miss a single word for ten dollars in gold! Read it, sir, for me. If you are a friend of Tom Worth, and I believe you are, there can be no secrets in it from you. Read it, Mr. Morton; for, though your beard is white, your eyes—I know it—are younger and sharper than mine."

The stranger started at these words, and a smile flashed over his face; but, he took the letter, opened it, and spread out the sheet. As he did so, several bank-notes fell down. The stranger quietly picked them up and laid them on the table.

The old miner looked at the money, and then bowed his head.

"I will read Tom's letter if you are ready," said Mr. Morton, after a pause, in a low voice.

"Read, read on, sir," and the old man did not raise his head.

After another moment's hesitation, the stranger read in a steady, but subdued voice, as follows:

"DEAR BEN:—God be thanked that I can write to you again, and tell you that I have not forgotten you! Though many long months have rolled by since we parted on the banks of the river, yet, Ben, you are dear to me still. I have undergone much since I last saw you—ay, suffered much, but through all I have remembered you, the only true friend I ever had! I am far away now, Ben—far away from you and our dear old cabin on the hillside where you and your 'boy' have passed so many happy, honest hours together—"

The stranger's voice wavered; old Ben's giant frame shook like an aspen leaf.

"And, Ben, it may be," resumed the stranger, reading from the letter, "that we will never meet there. If such should be God's will, bow to it, Ben, and pray, with me, that we may meet in the bright hereafter. I have inclosed to you, Ben, notes to the value of one hundred pounds—the money of your native land—old England, so dear to you. I can afford it. Take it, Ben; it comes a free gift from one who loves you more tenderly than words can tell. Good-by, Ben—I can not say forever; but, should it be decreed that we meet no more on earth, do your whole part as a God-fearing man to meet me in the better land. May God bless you!"

For five minutes there was a complete silence; and then, as if fearing to speak, the old miner slowly raised his tear-bedewed face.

"I'll do it, Tom! I'll do it!" he whispered, in a deep tone, as if addressing the shade of his absent friend. "Trust me, Tom, for, with God's help, I will do it—will do *all* any thing to meet you again, my noble boy!"

He took the notes, pressed them silently to his lips, and placed them away in his bosom, as if they were souvenirs too sacred to place elsewhere.

The stranger's bosom heaved; his own stalwart frame shook; a pearly tear dropped down, and then another, and another, on his long white beard. He laid the open letter on the table, and rising, turned without a word to the door.

Suddenly, however, quick as lightning, he faced the old man, and, as he raised his tall form, his chest rising and falling tumultuously, he cried aloud:

"BEN!"

One wild, startled look, a convulsive gasping, and the old man reeled and fell forward, his brawny arms, now nerveless, clutching the other passionately around the neck.

"God be praised!" was all old Ben could say, as he drew the form of the richly-clad stranger to his bosom, and held him there in a giant's grasp.

CHAPTER XXVII.

BREAD CAST UPON THE WATERS.

The sun had been up for an hour, the next morning, when the tall, aristocratic Mr. Morton went forth from the humble cabin of the miner. And when he left it was in company with old Ben, who blithely took his way toward the "Black Diamond," where he was still a valuable hand.

The stranger did not in the least seem ashamed of old Ben's humble, grimy miner's suit, nor of the plain, unpretending appearance of the hard-working old man. They conversed earnestly and socially together, until they reached the Mount Washington road. Here Ben struck across the hillside toward the mines, and Mr. Morton

hurried on down the road, in the direction of the Smithfield street bridge.

When the stranger reached the foot of the road and stood on the abutment of the bridge, he paused a moment, and glanced up at the towering precipice of the coal hills. His eyes wandered about restlessly for a few seconds; but, finally, they settled on the black, cavernous opening of a mine. Just then a brawny figure stood by that far-away hole, but in a moment more had disappeared within the black depths.

Mr. Morton sighed gently, and then, almost instantly, a proud, triumphant smile flashed over his features. But, the smile passed off, too, and a serious, determined look settled on his fine face. Seeing, however, that he was attracting considerable attention from passers-by, he hurriedly turned about, and strode on over the bridge toward the city.

Just before he reached his hotel, at the further end of the bridge, he muttered, in an abstracted manner:

"Very strange! wondrous strange! These mutations in fortune! Stranger still that these two characters should play roles in this mysterious drama! 'Tis difficult to forget past events. There's foul-play, double-dealing, rascally somewhere! It may be well to investigate the matter; something curious may be brought to light, for the man is a scoundrel, if one walks the earth!"

With these strange words Mr. Morton passed on and entered the Monongahela House—no one paying any special heed to him.

This same day, after some searching about, which he did in a carriage and very leisurely, Mr. Morton engaged an elegant suite of rooms in a private house on Penn street, and had his numerous articles of baggage sent hither from the hotel. The stranger seemed to court privacy.

The conversation which was held the night before between old Ben and his visitor, was prolonged until far into the small hours.

And that conversation, though carried on in a low tone, was unflagging and earnest. In the course of it, several names familiar to the readers of this story were mentioned more than once.

At last, however, when the conference was closed, the stranger unceremoniously threw himself upon Ben's bed, and was soon wrapped in profound slumber.

'Tis needless, here, to detail the conversation of that night of surprise and joy to old Ben—joy that once again he had heard from Tom Worth, his "boy."

We can not wonder, then, after keeping such late hours, however good his company, that Mr. Morton looked somewhat haggard this morning, as he hurried into his hotel.

The day passed slowly away. After having had his baggage transferred to his room in Penn street, Mr. Morton occupied the time in writing, reading, and then, in overhauling several of his trunks.

With old Ben Walford the hours had flown swiftly, merrily away. He seemed like a new man, did this old miner, and those around him in the shafts and dark galleries of the underground world, noticed his changed demeanor, and paused more than once to hearken to his bold snatches of song, which now and then rung through the pit.

Old Ben was happy.

Why should he not be? He had heard from Tom, and his "boy" had sent him a large sum of money!

And then, too, Ben had the promise of another early visit from the white-whiskered Mr. Morton, to whom it was evident the old miner had taken a wondrous liking.

Night had once more fallen upon the city and its suburbs. The raw autumn wind was blowing lustily, betokening by its chilly breath, the early coming of the winter. A racing squadron of leaden clouds was flying across the sky, and no moon or stars, save at long intervals, mirrored their silvery images in the bosom of the broad rivers hurrying by the dark city.

It was the night after the arrival of the mysterious stranger—the night after Fairleigh Somerville's induction as owner, into the princely mansion on Stockton avenue—the night after Richard Harley was led away from the lordly dwelling, lately his, to a humble home on Cedar avenue—led away by his dove-eyed, sad-faced daughter in black.

The hour was ten, and in this sober, staid little suburb of Pittsburgh—Allegheny city—the lamp-lighters were already extinguishing the gas in the streets; for, in this exemplary borough, lone in certain localities, the citizens had long since retired for the night, and there was no need of light.

The gas lamps along the quiet, unpretending Cedar avenue had ceased to fling out their glimmer for over an hour. But, in one small, humble house on this retired street there beamed forth a light. It came from a curtainless window on the first floor of the little tenement.

Two figures, both brawny and athletic, crept cautiously along the lonely avenue. They paused once or twice to look around them, but only for a moment.

"I must—I must be satisfied!" muttered one of the men. "I can not sleep until I have found their abode."

"Yes, yes, sir; I know your feelings, and—Ha! sh! sh! There, sir! there!" and the other sunk his voice to a whisper, even lower than that in which they had been conversing.

The first speaker paused and glanced across the street, in the direction his companion had pointed. He started as if shot, and trembling in every limb, sunk back against the fence which skirted the Common. But he gazed again.

Just opposite from these two men was the curtainless window, aglow with light, to which we have referred. Standing in the broad flash, which sparkled from the window, was a tall, stately maiden, with a sad visage, her hair falling in disarray—her eyes red with weeping, her arms gently clasping an old man round the neck—the old man leaning motionless over the back of a chair.

In an instant, however, the maiden released her arms from the old man's neck, and going to the window flung up the sash, and drew the shutters hastily to.

The tall man without, who had staggered back against the friendly railing, slowly straightened up and whispered:

"Come, my friend; I now have seen! We must be gone!"

The two hurried swiftly away from the spot toward the black-bosomed river. As they passed a single, solitary lamp, left burning, as it were, by an oversight, the rays flashed upon them; but they were gone so quickly that he who came last was only revealed. He was an old man with a giant frame, hard-featured and honest-faced.

They hurried away, and in ten minutes entered a carriage on Federal street, and drove off toward the Suspension bridge.

The day following, about ten o'clock in the morning, an elegant carriage drew up in front of a lowly two-story house on Cedar avenue, in Allegheny city, and Felix Morton descended from the vehicle.

"Drive to the corner yonder and await me; I will come in a few moments," he said.

"Yes, sir," replied the coachman, obsequiously.

Mr. Morton paused as the carriage drove off, and gazed covertly, half-pityingly at that unpretending tenement, now sheltering one who, in a former day, had boasted of his great wealth.

Just then old Ben Walford, staggering along under a huge basket, rapped at the little side alley. Ben had a holiday this morning from the mine, and a joyous glow was overspreading his face. It may have been that the holiday occasioned this; or, perhaps it was the result of the hundred pounds his absent friend Tom Worth had sent him by this same stranger.

The old man did not seem surprised at seeing Mr. Morton, though it was evident that the latter was startled at the sight of the miner.

"This is my offering, sir," said the old man, in a low voice, smiling sweetly and good-naturedly.

Mr. Morton did not answer; he simply placed his gloved finger upon his lips, and turning at once, walked up the steps and rung the bell.

Old Ben disappeared in the alley, and in a moment a glad, joyous voice—that of a female—was heard welcoming him warmly. Then there was a silence, and then a sob. Then old Ben's honest words were heard saying, sternly:

"Bear up, bear up, Miss Grace! You've friends still, and you see old Ben has found you, and he thinks more of you than ever!"

Mr. Morton's frame shook. But, suddenly, shambling footsteps were heard within the hall; then the bolt was turned by a feeble hand. The door opened, and poor old Richard Harley, sad and worn, anxious and haggard, clad in dressing-gown and slippers, stood there.

The stranger evidently had need to control himself; but, despite his efforts, he shook in every limb, and a yearning, sympathizing look came to his face, as his eyes fell on the ruined ex-iron merchant. But, he managed to force a composure to his face, and self-possession in his manner.

Mr. Harley himself started back as he saw the richly-clad stranger standing there; and, do what he could, a blush of shame came to his cheeks, and then a tear dimmed his eye.

Mr. Morton pretended not to see these traces of emotion, and said, with a bow:

"I presume this is Mr. Richard Harley?"

"Yes, sir, I am he. Walk in, sir. I am poorly established as yet, sir, but—"

"Not a word, Mr. Harley," interrupted the other, hastily. "Excuse me for not entering, sir. I am somewhat pressed for time to-day, and, as I have called on business, I'll be brief, sir."

He paused for a moment, Mr. Harley looking at him all the time with wondering eyes.

"My name is Felix Morton, sir," continued the stranger, hastily. "I have been empowered by a friend of mine—a former acquaintance, I believe, of yours, long months since—to hand you this parcel. I have guarded it carefully, sir, and now beg to place it in your hands, and I wish you good-morning, sir."

Mr. Harley took the parcel as one in a dream; but, before he could speak, Mr. Morton had gone.

The old man shuffled back into the room, and sunk in a seat. As soon as he could recover himself he tore open, with trembling fingers, the stout package or envelop. A sheet of paper fell out. The old man spread it open, and took therefrom several bank-notes.

With amazement showing in every feature—more as if he was dreaming than

waking—the old man again spread out the sheet, and read the following:

"MY DEAR SIR—"

"I have not forgotten your kindness to me, long ago, on the East Liberty road, when you took me in and sheltered me. And though I and my fortunes, since then, have been under a cloud, yet I have not ceased to remember you with gratitude, whatever your feelings have been toward me. Remember me—if you can conquer unseemly prejudice—to Grace, and assure her of my unchanging love. I inclose a sum which may serve to show you—though you are a rich man—that I am not lacking in gratitude. May God bless you under all circumstances, and may He bless Grace, too. I send this by a safe hand, and though many miles are before him, he will deliver it safely. You will know who I am when I sign myself,

"Yours, with gratitude,

"TOM WORTH."

The letter fluttered down, and the old man gazed speechlessly at the four fifty-pound notes which had dropped from the parcel. And then, as a heartfelt prayer of gratitude was going up from his soul, he felt a hand laid gently upon his shoulder.

Grace Harley, as always, clad in black, was standing there, and her eyes were filled with tears—her lips were trembling, and a holy love and joy were filling her bosom.

She had read every line of Tom's letter!

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 15.)

Hints and Helps.

How to Grow Rich.—The only way by which capital can increase is by saving. This is the way the poor become affluent and the wealthy wealthier. If you spend as much as you get you will never be richer than you are. It is not what a man gets, but what he saves, that constitutes his wealth. Go learn the first two rules of the arithmetic; learn addition and subtraction. Add to your capital any amount you please, and subtract the sum which you add, and the last amount will be the same as the first. Every one should, in every year of his life, make some additions to his capital. You say you get little—never mind—spend less than little, and then next year you will have more, for you will have the profit on what you save. There is no royal road to wealth any more than to geometry. The man who goes on spending all he gets, and expects by some lucky hit he shall be raised to wealth, will most likely sink into poverty, for in case of adverse fortune he has no resource; whereas by economy he may lay by a stock that may serve as provision in times of adversity. You may say that the times are bad, or the seasons are bad. Be it so, but were the case reversed it would make no difference with you. Look at home, you spend more than you get; how many respectable families have fallen from a high station, which they honorably, worthily filled, because neither the husband nor wife knew the first two rules of arithmetic? Had they known how to check their household accounts, and how to compare their receipts with their expenditures, and to see which preponderated, all their difficulties might have been avoided. A very small acquaintance with the rules of business would be sufficient to teach them that if a man spends every year more than he receives, he will necessarily fall into poverty.

Correct Speaking.—One of the most pleasing things in young people is the habit of correct speaking. Let us advise all our young readers to acquire it in early life. The longer you live the more difficult the acquirement of correct language will be; and if the golden age of youth, the proper season for the acquisition of language, be passed in its abuse, the unfortunate victim, if neglected, is very properly doomed to talk slang for life. Money is not necessary to procure this education. Every one has it in his power. He has merely to use the language which he reads, instead of the slang which he hears, to form his taste from the best speakers and poets in his country, to treasure up choice phrases in his memory, and habituate himself to their use, avoiding at the same time that pedantic precision and bombast which show the weakness of vain ambition rather than the polish of an educated mind.

Fat and Lean People.—It is a striking fact that most people want to weigh more than they do, and measure their health by their weight, as if a man were a pig, valuable in proportion to his heaviness. The racer is not fat, the plow-horse has but a moderate amount of flesh. Heavy men are not those which experienced contractors employ to dig railroads and ditches. Thin men, the world over, are the men for work; for endurance, they are wiry and hardy; thin people live the longest; the truth is, fat is disease, and as proof, fat people are never well a day at a time—and are not suited for hard work. Still there is a medium between being as fat as a butter-ball and as thin and juicy as a rail. For mere looks, a moderate rotundity is most desirable; to have enough flesh to cover all angularities. To accomplish this in the shortest time, a man should work but little, sleep a great part of the time, allow nothing to worry him, keep always in a joyous, laughing mood, and live chiefly on albuminates, such as boiled cracked wheat, and rye, and oats, and corn, and barley, and sweet milk, and buttermilk, and meats. Sugar is the best fatterer known.

Platinized Mirrors.—If we substitute a thin film of platinum for silver, or for the commonly-used tin amalgam, to make a glass mirror, we obtain a mirror of great permanency. It resists the action of all atmospheric agencies, and as the reflecting surface is in the front of the glass, there is less danger of distortion, and an inferior quality of glass can be employed. It is as easy to manufacture curved and round as to make plane mirrors. As the thinly platinized glass is transparent, a person placed in the rear of an office can see every thing going on in front of the office without himself being seen. So also at night, when the shutters are closed, the windows would become mirrors if coated with platinum in this way. As silver is easily tarnished and platinum is not, the new process will be valuable for all kinds of reflectors. For ghost and shadow pictures, and in philosophical instruments, and in the ophthalmoscope, there would seem to be an extensive application for these platinum mirrors.

Saturday Journal

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A LIFTING AWAY OF THE VAIL.

In the coming issue of this paper will be given the first chapters of a new serial romance, from the ever-welcome pen of

DR. WILLIAM MASON TURNER,

of Philadelphia, a writer to whom dramatic power of story and intensely vivid style have given a supreme place among the writers of American Fiction. In this new production the fearless author

UNVAILS THE QUAKER CITY.

exhibiting to the surprised reader persons and acts in the "City of Brotherly Love" which will create a profound impression even in communities not directly associated with the scene of the story. It shows how professedly leading citizens may be

SERVANTS OF SATAN.

and what horrid wiles—what detestable arts are used to entrap the unwary and to lure the innocent to ruin, in that great city of the great Keystone State. It unmasks the gilded dens where lurk the Tempter and where pine the Tempted, and gives forcible emphasis to the injunction

BEWARE OF THE MAN OF THE WORLD!

It is a serial, every chapter of which teems with excitement and feeling. It treats of a

The Noble-hearted Actor.

The Sad-hearted Actress.

The Devoted Woman of Faith.

The Deep-dyed Villain in Broadcloth.

The Wretched Woman of the Gilded Prison.

The Perverse Giant of the Slums.

The Strange Den of Rogues.

all in a narrative of unrivaled interest, of marked beauty and impressive excellence. The author regards it as one of his best—which is commendation high.

LOOK OUT FOR IT!

Contributors and Correspondents.

Notwithstanding our explicit announcements that no MS. will be preserved at subject to future correspondence and order, a large number of contributions are remitted us, with no stamps for a return; and then, after a week or two of delay, a letter comes making inquiries regarding the fate of a certain inclosure. We can but repeat—after a MS. has once been handled by us, we can not be bothered to again hunt it up and to answer inquiries concerning it. Let every author write a note to us at the same time he or she mails a MS.; let stamps then be inclosed for its return. If it is unavailable and to be returned; otherwise as soon as read and rejected the MS. goes into the waste-basket. This rule is absolutely essential to dispatch of business, and therefore is inexorable, so our correspondents must govern themselves accordingly.

Judging by the specimens submitted by "HATTIE" and "MERRY MARY" we can give them but slight encouragement to write for the SATURDAY JOURNAL. Their kind of matter is not what is required in a popular paper.

The several MSS. by J. G. M., Jr., we can not use. The author's MS. is, in many words, quite illegible. We have quite a surplus of matter of the nature of that inclosed.

"How IT ENDED" is returned—Ditto "A LIFE HISTORY"; "BARTON HUNT'S DREAM"; "CAT AND KITTEN"; "A LADY OF THE LAKES"; "TWO TIMES TWO"; "RUBBISH"; "WISDOM AS SOLOMON AND AS WEAK"; "MARY AT THE MEADOW GATE"; "ALL FOR GOLD"; "TWICE IN BONDS"; "THE KEEPER OF THE SEALS"; "Twice, etc.

J. G. La R. is informed that we make no formal announcement of "Our Contributors." His little essay on "CONVENT" is hardly good enough for our use. No stamps.

MS. "STOLEN FROM HOME" is unavailable, and is returned, as per order.

Story by H. M. B. we can not use and re-mail the MS. to Dover, Del. The author's direction is returned blindly given in his note.

HENRY ST. JOHN asks advice about going upon the stage. Like all professions that of actor is overdone, and hundreds of men and women who try it fall of great success, less from any want of merit than because all places are fully preoccupied—there is no chance for them. Wages are too small for the beginner to live upon. If Henry has real talent for the drama let him make the acquaintance of some manager or actor, in his own town, and learn from him all there is to learn of the practical facts of dramatic requisitions, etc. The poems inclosed we can not use. They show signs of good taste, but are quite crude. The writer deserves praise for his efforts to improve.

"Time and tide wait for no man"—which, applied to the case of J. S. C., means, if you really love the young lady you'll not delay in sailing in for her heart and hand. Girls are not a fickle set, by any showing that is true; they are coy and timid, and never will make the slightest advance, even though they really love you. That is their nature. So you must not take reserve to mean indifference, for it may, indeed, mean the very opposite. (See chapter, "Dawn of Love," in BEADLE'S DIME LOVER'S CASSETTE.) If the lady is sensible and good, she will meet your advances in a manner sufficiently significant for you to determine whether or not you can become her chosen.

J. K. H., Jr., writes us a "GAME," which might do to make the girls laugh, but not for publication. The author is too young to pluck any fruit from his fancy's store; it is not ripe enough. His promise to write "a story" had better be held in abeyance—say for five years.

Foolscap Papers.

Saratoga-ward.

It would be useless and altogether inconsistent with my principles for me to deny that I am an exceedingly popular man. That I have been a benefactor of my race nobody that believes it will deny; and I have always looked out for my own interest with a love of country which can have no parallel either in this world or Washington city. My charity is boundless. I have never seen myself hungry but I clothed myself. I have never been short of garments but I fed myself. If I was sick and cast into prison—but I won't say any thing about that. I have been a father to the motherless, and a mother to the fatherless. My name is a by-word in the land; people gaze at me wherever I go, and it is needless to say everybody is taking notes of me. Napoleon presented me with the cross of the Lee John of Onar. I am a member of a Ruseian society whose name has all the letters of our alphabet and one or two others: a member of a young ladies' sewing society; a member of the society of Nebristes; and last, but not least, a member of my own family. Such honors have not been undeservedly won, but still I don't feel myself a great deal above others.

Honors flow in upon me uncalled. I have been presented with complimentary tickets to all the colored shows, and varieties of others; been interviewed by reporters, and have free passes over all the plank and railroads around, not to mention the sidewalks; and am offered free lunch, at all the principal watering-place hotels, regardless of appetite.

I had given notice to the world that I would start for Saratoga one day last week, whereupon Jimph Isque, Jr.—"Prince Jim," the card said—very early that morning sent up his card and begged to be allowed to follow it. After some hesitation I told my servant to remove the stair-rod and show him up. He entered very greatly agitated, but when I assured him that I was a human being and very little more of a man than he, he recovered speech and said:

"Mr. Whitehorn, hearing you were about going the rounds of the summer-resorts, I come to beg to be allowed to ask the favor of being permitted to form one of your party of two, and shall hand the honor down to my grand-children written on the margin of a legal locomotive tender, with an Erie bond attached.

"I have left a box of wine at your door with which to smooth the journey, and which I pray you will accept."

I ordered my servant to take in the wine, and told Jimmy that I was aware of the honor it would be to him, but as I was going, this time, for pleasure, it was something which I couldn't meditate on; the weather being very warmly, gold 114 in the shade, and all the wind being in the Erie stocks. I took the opportunity of telling him that I had had an eye on him and Jagold lately, and would beg him to divide between them this little bit of advice: that people who go up in a whirlwind are very apt to come down in a calm. And that Time can not always be counted by fiscal years, nor the mixture of copper and zinc keep on a gould basis.

He batted this up in his ear, and left, and I found his wine was good, and it didn't prevent me from starting on my trip, for I took it along. Two bottles of it induced me to get on the wrong train at the start; another put me on the right one, and made me say, "I pass" when the conductor came round. When they heard that I was aboard, people came back in a mass from the fourth car ahead; the engineer would have come but he had to watch a cow running ahead on the track. Everybody begged for the pleasure of shaking my little finger, while I was invited to accept the freedom of seventeen villas on the Hudson for the summer, but as I couldn't accept, I borrowed five hundred dollars in lieu thereof. Another bottle, which I didn't even leave the smell in, took me to Saratoga, and sat me down at Congress Hall, just as Saturday evening was getting shady.

Thirteen Roamin' senators begged for the honor of registering my name and blackening my boots. If smell amounts to any thing, it's very little Congress-water they drink, for the scent of the roses will hang round the still.

After supper I was escorted to the ball-room, and, as all the ladies wanted to dance with me the first set, there was a little delay, which was obviated by me taking the floor with six partners, and promising to come back for the balance. It was a round-dance. I like round-dances. I had previously taken another bottle of wine to give me the necessary motion, and I got through well, considering the room never stopped when I did, and the vast number of womanly corns I stepped on, with "No pain in the least, sir." Got very tired.

Eight servants asked in one voice if they could be of any service to me. I told them none unless they could bring my room down to me, as my eyelids were heavy, whether my head was or not. A brass band was instantly brought, and I went up to my room in procession, and to bed.

Got up shortly after to go down and order the box of wine taken to my room. Unfortunate mistake! coming back I got into the wrong room. Oh, how could I! why should I! Great scattering of angels in white. Stupendous screams. My head completely turned, frightened nearly to death. Started out through the wardrobe door—couldn't make it—turned and rushed headlong through a large mirror—baffled—another run—feet in hoop-skirts, plunge under a bed, and fortunately remembered nothing else until I woke up in the same room alone next morning; when, not having my full suit of clothes with me, I put on a dressing-gown lying there and went to breakfast, when I discovered the gown was a lady's calico dress, and left the table with animation, and took another bottle, and then proceeded to pull my head off with a rifled piece of ordnance they call a boot-jack.

Went out and halted the finest kind of a turn-out on the street, and jumped in. "Driver, take me around," said I, "and don't be stingy about the speed." The driver, who had a fine livery, illustrated with much gold chain, turned round and asked me if I was aware who he was or might be; told him I was in blissful ignorance of it. He gave me his card. John Morris—he was the driver; shook hands with him; handed him my handkerchief with my name on it. He was struck dumb; shook hands again and away we went. The wrong vehicle proved to be the right one that time, and he made me promise to call on him the next day, which I did, and am sorry to say I went to the wrong place that time, for I left there neglecting to bring what little money I took, and for the balance I gave my note.

Went to church; took fine pew—female family filled into pew behind me—subdued whispering—old fool—shameful—think of it. Break his neck with parol—miserable sinner—knock head off with hymn-book, and other manifestations of Christian humility. Felt something very hot on my head—burning glances. Turned round—received several angelic looks of profound hate—began to realize that I was in the wrong pew, but with a magnanimity worthy of Diogenes I stayed there—heard about as much of the sermon as anybody did, and leaving gave that female family my handkerchief, and dined with them the next day.

One bottle of the wine got me into a fuss in the billiard-room next evening, but I cleaned them all out; at least when I woke up on the billiard-table at twelve o'clock there was nobody in sight, and the last bottle persuaded me to stop, and take some soda-water.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

WHAT I KNOW ABOUT IT.

Reverend and suspected Asphaltum Borax, Esq.:

DEAR SIR: In response to your earnest request, not accompanied by the cash, I hasten to communicate to you a few of my interesting experiments in horticulture. They are simple enough to be understood by the merest tyro (no allusion to yourself) and I may add without vanity, are as wonderful as they are credible.

In cucumbers I have effected a great improvement. Not doubting that they were originally called cow-cumbers, and knowing the transformations that have been produced in the vegetable world during so many ages, I naturally concluded that they must be in some way related to the domestic animal that supplies our lactical fluid. The only question was, how to restore that relation. Some illustrious experimentalists have accomplished a good deal by hybridization. I accomplished a greater dealer by inoculation. I inoculated a cow-cucumber with some "truck" taken from the udder of a cow. What is the result? My little cow-cumbers all cry "Ma-a-a" when I go into the garden, and evince a propensity to suck my fingers. I cut open a large one the other day, and found it as full of milk as any cocoanut. The big wind the other night rolled them about considerably, and in each of the ripe ones was four ounces of excellent butter.

I have succeeded even more brilliantly with my watermelons, by the way; I grow them in my ice-house, so that I always have them cool. The only objection I ever had to them was the water, and I remember your once mentioning to me, when you had just finished eating one of my ninety-five pound melons, that it would be an excellent thing if a little whisky could be mixed with that water. I procured a hog-head of still-house beer, with which I "watered" my plants morning and evening. The result is a melon full of a cool, delicious, refreshing and stimulating "beverage," which, like the apple-toddy of olden time, pleasantly and cheaply combines eating and drinking. The only drawback to this discovery is, that I have been compelled to invest largely in revenue stamps, and to pay five dollars a day to a United States inspector, who sleeps among the melon-vines. It is some consolation to know that I find him in such a condition every morning, that I am always able to extract from his pockets the wages of the previous day.

Without doubt clover is a great fertilizer. After reading in that romantic periodical issued by the Department of Agriculture, that the roots of clover sometimes attain a length of three and a half feet, I knew that if those blockheads could find out so much, I could find out a great deal more.

With the aid of the biggest bore in the neighborhood, I followed the root of one of my clover-plants, until it came out in China, where I discovered that an enterprising Celestial had grafted a tea-plant upon it. My wife had noticed, all through the summer, that the milk of the cow that runs in that pasture had had a strong taste of tea. When I got a plow that will turn up the entire roots of that clover-field, it will be so rich that the whole income tax may be collected from it.

By careful hybridization and inoculation, I have succeeded in forcing one of my pear-trees to produce squashes, blue-tailed flies and fresh-laid eggs. My pears, too, are always twins.

I have been an advocate of deep plowing ever since I learned to play mumble-the-peg. Lately I have begun to favor deep planting. To give the plan a fair trial, I planted some pumpkin-seeds over the right side of my garden, and put them in sixteen feet deep. I watched them, to see how and where they would come up. To my great surprise, every seed that was planted over the right side of the garden came up over the left.

M. T. HEAD.

AMERICAN HOMES A FAILURE.

Day by day the trials and troubles of housekeeping increase, until the cry from city and country, alike, is: "What are we to do for help?" Housewives are breaking down in health; households are miserable; everybody is dissatisfied. Where "help" is secured, it is at the sacrifice of economy, and much to the restriction of the independence of the household. Fathers grumble, mothers are worried, daughters are fretful. No longer the old time happiness beams from happy, healthful faces, when a Sabbath day comes. The minister sees before him a congregation of anxious-browed people—a weary, careworn audience, whose life is a daily struggle to maintain its position and to discharge its inevitable duties. Homes are no longer sanctuaries of peace and comfort, but are so many rooms to be cared for, so many mouths to feed, so many customs to be observed.

Nor is there any prospect of a change for the better. One of our great intelligence offices reports a decrease in 1870 of fully thirty-three per cent in the number of those wanting places as house-servants, while the demand for them has largely increased over that of previous years. The hiring girls are drifting into shops, stores, and manufacturing, and are getting above the kitchen. They now so feel their power that they dictate to employers. Time, terms and the labor to be done, all are at their pleasure, as any employer will quickly ascertain who seeks for "help." Wages of course advance with the short supply, and another year will see common girls, good only for rough work and washing, demanding fifteen dollars per month, and two days in the month for their own. Struggle against it as we may, this is the fact, and every month's experience will but add to the conviction that American Homes are a failure and house-keeping a disaster.

How is it to end? Is there any cure for the affliction? We will try and answer in our next.

FRIENDSHIP.

Never say that you have a friend until you have tried him, and then you may with safety call him your friend.

There are two classes of friends, those which befriend you as long as you have your pockets full, and those who befriend you in need and trouble. The former are always ready to flatter and praise you, are always ready to advise you whether to good or bad, what care they, and at the same time keep an eye on your pocket-book, and when they notice that it is growing thinner, they gradually drop off one by one and leave their "dear friend" or rather victim, to get along as well as he can; and when they are called upon for help by the victim, they are always ready with, "excuse me, I have no funds at present," or, "I am sorry, and I feel for you, but I can not help you," and so the victim is left to himself and despair.

The other class is the true, kind friend; he is always with you, whether in need, trouble, danger or care; you will always be sure to find him true to you. He has no eye on your pocket-book to see whether it is full or empty; he does not flatter you or praise you unless you deserve it; he always advises you to good; he tells you when you do wrong or when you do right; he assists you in trouble; he helps you when you are in need; he is near you when you are in danger. He is free from all deceit, and will not forsake you when hard trials come over you, but he will stay and help you to fight them bravely.

Many attach themselves to persons whom they know nothing about, whom they have never seen before; they call them their friends, admit them into their secrets and open their hearts to them; and all this before they have tried them. What will be the result? They are duped by their new friends, and before they are aware of it, they are deceived, their secrets are betrayed, and then, when it is too late, they find that they have been duped.

A person desirous of a true friend, will try him first before he calls him his friend, or accepts him as his friend; and when he has tried him and found him perfect, then he will slowly and gradually accept and trust him as a friend.

ALEXANDER NOEL.

THE LANGUAGE OF A TEAR.

The eye was blue, the cheek was red,
The tear's swift course no wrinkles met;
And as it passed, it simply said,
"The child has seen no troubles yet."
"I like a drop of April rain,"
Come only to refresh and cheer;
I quickly pass, and smiles again
Shine brighter, for this childhood's tear."
I saw it, silently and slow,
Steal down a maiden's paling cheek;
White words, soft-spoken, sweet and low,
She heard—such words as lovers speak.
"The heart that sent me, throbs to-day!
With joy and pain—a mingled cup;
She smiles, and merry dimples play;
She sighs, and tears well gently up."
"A joy, a grief, a hope, a fear;
This love is woman's crown and cross;
She knows the pleading one is dear.
Yet weeps and vaguely mourns a loss."
I saw it when the mother clasped
Her first-born to her throbbing breast;
A dream of purest pleasure grasped,
The tear of joy full well expressed.
An aged pilgrim's soul ascends,
Her dying words a glad, "I come!"
She weeps, in grief for mourning friends;
In rapture, as she nears her home.

City Life Sketches.

LENA.

The Street Singer.

BY AGILE PENNE.

A warm summer evening in July. Broadway, the great artery of the overgrown metropolis, New York, was thinly peopled; the busy haunts of trade were closed; the great life-stream had ceased to ebb up and down, and a few stragglers alone occupied the pavement.

The clocks had struck ten. The busy hum of city life—the roll of the vehicles and the tramp of many feet—had given place to the calm stillness of the summer night. In a doorway opposite the St. Nicholas hotel, half hid from the view of the idle passer-by by the gloom of the night, sat a young girl holding an infant in her arms—a girl young in years, but bearing on her thin, wan face the marks of care and sorrow. She was poorly dressed. Poverty was plainly apparent in her garb.

The infant, held tenderly in her arms, was a beautiful babe, but its little face, like that of its mother, was wan and thin.

Mother and child evidently were subjects of the grim king, poverty—the monarch whose iron hand lines the face, crushes the heart, and makes death a welcome guest.

How many there are in this great modern Sodom who own the rule of this merciless monarch, who toil from morn till night merely for the bare means of existence—that they may live, even though the life they lead is but living death.

The mother gazed down into the wan, white face of the babe that slept so calmly on her bosom. The flickering rays that came from the gas-lights danced in wavy beams over the little face, and revealed plainly to the mother's anxious eye the stern, pitiful lines of suffering and privation.

The iron shaft of anguish entered the quivering heart of the parent as she gazed upon the face of her infant.

One, to look at the girl, could hardly believe that she was the mother of the child.

The little face, fringed by the dark-brown hair, that rippled back from the low, white forehead in many a wavy curl, was the face of a girl of fifteen—a child, not a woman and a mother.

Early the cares of wifehood had descended upon that shapely little head. Eighteen years only had cast her shadows over her path. A year before the July night of which we write, Lena Ashton—such was the name of the girl—was the petted and spoiled darling of her parents, in the little village of Palatine Bridge, that nestles so cozily by the placid Mohawk on the line of the New York Central Railway; and now—an elapse only of a single year—Lena Ashton, an outcast and wanderer, with a babe in her arms, sits desolate and alone in the great Babylon of the New World. And on the face of the infant that she hugged so tightly to her breast a father's eye had never looked.

A tear dimmed the clear brown eye of the young mother as she looked upon the pale face of her infant. The tears rolling slowly down her pallid cheeks shone like diamonds in the quivering light. Precious were they in the eyes of the Lord, for they were distilled from the heart's blood of the girlish woman, wrung from her very soul by the thoughts of the suffering of her babe.

Of all the loves of this earth, what love can equal the mother's for her child?

A tear-drop from the eye of the parent glistened upon the white forehead of the infant. With a convulsive motion, the mother kissed it away.

The girl looked around her; a little knot of people were coming slowly up the street. The quick eye of the woman noticed them.

"Once again for your sake, baby," she murmured; "you must live, and—heaven help me—I have not the strength to earn by toil the food that is necessary to your existence. I must use, then, the gifts that heaven has given me. It is but little better than begging, but, for your sake, my darling, I will submit to any humiliation."

Then, with a great effort, choking back the sobs that gathered in her throat, she thrilled out on the calm evening air, in a clear, sweet voice, whose tones were full of liquid music, the song of "Annie of the banks of Dee."

As the clear, girlish voice, so full of music, broke the stillness of the night, the people passing stopped to listen.

A street-singer is something of a rarity, even in New York, where almost every thing can be seen. And when the singer is a young and pretty girl, and one, too, gifted by nature with a splendid voice, and that voice cultured in the school of art, it is little wonder that all within sound of the liquid music came to listen.

Clearly and without missing a single note—for it was not the first time that the young mother had sung for the holy purpose of providing the means by which her child might live, and she had served herself to the task—she sung the song through.

At its close a general murmur of appro-

bation broke from the little crowd of people that had collected around the girl, attracted by the music.

"That's a bully, sis!" ejaculated a stout, short-haired individual, a good representative of the class known as Bowery boys. "Here's a stamp for yer," and he put a ten-cent scrip into her hand. Others of the crowd followed his example.

"Say, sis, give us 'Shoo Fly,' won't ye?" said the Bowery sport, after the crowd had made their contributions.

"Yes, sir," the girl said, lowly.

Then, with her clear voice, she sung the popular negro melody, to the intense delight of the Bowery boy, who kept time with his hands to the air and joined audibly in the chorus.

"That's just high!" he exclaimed, after she had finished, and he put another ten-cent stamp into her hands. The crowd again followed his example. With a low "thank you" the girl took the money and rose to depart. The crowd, seeing that the fun was over, went on their several ways, all excepting a tall, handsome fellow, elegantly dressed, who had joined the little knot of people collected around the girl just as she was singing the last refrain of the celebrated "Shoo Fly."

The moment the voice of the singer fell upon the ears of the young man he started as if he had received an electric shock.

For an instant he listened to the clear, sweet tones like one in a dream. Mechanically he passed his hand across his forehead as if to ask himself if he was not under the influence of some horrible vision.

Then he eagerly pressed nearer to the singer and looked anxiously into her face. In the darkness, though, he could hardly distinguish her features.

"Can it be possible?" he muttered to himself in wonder, as he tried, though in vain, to see the face of the street singer.

No, no, it can not be possible," he continued, still communing with himself; "she could not be in a position like this, and yet the voice—I would swear to it anywhere. I must and will see her face. That is the only way to satisfy my doubts."

After the little crowd had dispersed, the street singer rose to her feet.

The young man who had been so strangely agitated by the voice of the girl approached her with a bill in his hand.

"Let me contribute something," he said, giving her the bill, and endeavoring to look into her face. But, standing as she was in the gloom of the doorway, his attempt was unsuccessful.

The moment the sound of his voice fell upon her hearing she started the same as he had when he had heard her voice.

She took the bill in her outstretched hand, crumpled it up in her palm, and then, with an angry motion, threw it into his face. Then she passed swiftly by him and walked—almost ran—down the street.

The young man stood like one bewildered for a moment.

"It is she!" he cried, in a tone of conviction. "What can she mean by treating me this way? She must have recognized me; but, perhaps not. She may have thought me a stranger, and that I intended to insult her. I will follow her at once. Great heavens, what can have reduced her to this terrible extremity?"

Then, with hasty strides, he followed in the footsteps of the woman.

He overtook her on the corner of Broome street.

"Lena!" he cried, "do you not know me?"

Perceiving that he was determined to accost her, she halted.

"Yes, I do know you, Lucien Granger—know you to my sorrow," she replied, bitterly.

The young man stared in astonishment. He could not comprehend the meaning of this strange speech.

"Lena, are you out of your senses?" he asked, in amazement. "What is the meaning of this? I could hardly believe my ears when I heard the tones of your voice to-night. You singing for money in the streets of New York?"

"Yes, and you dared to offer me money?" cried the girl, indignantly. "I would rather starve than touch one penny that came from you."

"There is some grave misunderstanding here," said Lucien, who could not guess a reason for the strange words of the street singer. "But, this is no place to talk. Have you a home?"

"Yes, such as it is," answered the girl; "but the poor—the starving—can not be particular; they must take what they can get."

"Take me to your home then. There must be an understanding between us. I am willing to forgive the wrong that you have done me."

"I wrong you?" cried the girl, indignantly; "rather say the wrong that you have done me."

"Again I say, there is some strange misunderstanding here!" exclaimed Lucien.

"All I ask is a few minutes of your time to explain my actions, which I can do, clearly and fully. I hope you may be able to do the same."

"I will give you the chance," said the girl, quickly. "Come with me and see the refuge to which your cruelty has driven your wife and child."

Without a word, Lucien followed the girl. She led the way to a tenement-house in Mott street—a house situated in the rear of another—access to it being had through a small and dirty alleyway.

To a small room on the very top of the house the girl led the young man.

She lit a candle. The infant she placed carefully on the wretched little bed that was made up on the bare floor.

The young man looked around upon the dirty wall, carpetless floor and scanty furniture with horror.

"This your home?" he cried.

"Yes, the home which my love for you has given me," she answered, bitterly.

"You speak in riddles. Tell me how I have ever wronged you."

"I will," she answered. "You came to Palatine Bridge, found me a happy girl, living with my parents. You won my love and made me your wife secretly, for you said you feared the anger of your wealthy father. You took me to Albany, left me there, while you went to New York to break the knowledge of your marriage to your father. You left me in charge of your friend, Charles Harding. Three days after you left me he said that you had written him to bring me to New York; so I came with him. Here his conscience smote him, and he told me the truth—that my marriage was a false one, and that you had deserted me. Then he dared to offer me his protection. I spurned him; earned my bread by

my needle, for I did not dare to return to my father's house, a guilty thing. Then my baby was born. My health was poor. I could not sew, and I have sung in the street that it might live."

"Oh, Lena," cried Lucien, impulsively, "we have both been the dupes of a villain. This man came to me and said that you had fled with a notorious blackleg from Albany. Struck to the heart by the blow—for I believed him—after a fruitless search for you, I went to Europe, hoping to find consolation in travel. I have just returned. Heaven has given you to my arms again. Lena, do you believe me?"

With a cry of joy the girl threw herself into the arms of her husband.

After a long night of sorrow, the light had come.

Lucien's father in the interim had died, and he was free to act his own pleasure.

Few would recognize in the wife of the wealthy Lucien Granger, Lena, the Street Singer.

The Doctor's Patient.

A STORY OF THE CRESCENT CITY.

BY T. C. HARRAUGH.

RAP, RAP, RAP.

The summons roused the young doctor from his reverie, and he rose from the armchair. As he did so he glanced at the little clock that ticked away on the mantle, and noted the hour. It was half-past twelve—midnight!

"I thought some one would come before morning," he murmured; "I hope the sufferer does not live far away, for I am tired almost to death. I thought the day would never end; but at last night came but to increase my toils. Oh, this is a terrible time for the poor Crescent City, and, as yet, the scourge does not abate."

As he spoke, he busied himself with donning the coat he had tossed upon his couch when he returned from his last visit.

Rap, rap, rap, again.

"The case must be a critical one," he exclaimed, and a moment later he was flying down the stairs to the front door of the boarding-house.

He quickly threw it open, and confronted a little girl about nine years of age.

"Well, my child?"

"Be you Doctor Leslie?" she asked, trying

The young physician went up the steps, and stepped into the hall. "Good-night, doctor," said the woman, slightly nodding. "We have a patient for you. I think she has the cholera. Mr. Gratz, one of my boarders, says she has got it. I guess Gratz knows, for his father was a doctor."

Oscar saw that the mistress of the house was inclined to rattle on indefinitely, while it was his duty to be at the bedside of the sick. "Gratz is doubtless learned in Esculapian lore," he said. "But, will you not show me to my patient? Perhaps she needs immediate medical attention."

"Of course I will, doctor. I hope she has not got the cholera; but Gratz says she has."

"Curse Gratz and his learning," cried Oscar, for the woman made no movement. "Is she in one of the upper rooms?" And he put his foot on the first step of the stairs.

"Yes; the first door to the right. You can find it. I wouldn't go up for a farm. I don't want the cholera. Gratz is careless; I've been telling him that."

"He ought to have the cholera," finished Oscar, as he sprang up the stairs, leaving the woman to complete her sentence to her daughter.

Reaching the head of the stairs, the young doctor stepped on tiptoe to the "first door to the right." Then he listened and heard the quick respiration of a person within the room.

"I believe she sleeps very lightly," he murmured, as he pressed the latch, and pushed the door open as noiselessly as possible.

He stepped across the threshold, and entered a small and very poorly-ventilated room, dimly lighted by a small lamp.

The articles of furniture were few, and consisted of a bureau, wash-stand, writing-desk, a bed, and two chairs.

A glance at the bed told him that it was occupied, and, treading lightly, he advanced to it.

Before him lay his strange patient in a fitful slumber. He did not disturb her, but quietly gazed upon the formidable inroads the disease had already made.

Her face was very beautiful, and, as he gazed upon it, an angelic expression enthroned itself there. One of the patient's arms hung at the side of the bed, and Oscar gently felt her pulse. It was quite feeble, and he saw that the dreadful collapse was not far distant.

The touch of his fingers seemed to send a

"Yes, Anna."

Then the little thing turned away, and Oscar heard her sobbing as she went downstairs.

He resumed his seat at his patient's side. At length she awoke and smiled. She was better; but the doctor saw that it was not good for her to speak.

"I have been thinking," he said, "that another room than this would be beneficial to you. This one is far from suitable for one in your condition. You might be removed now, without any thing serious attending the removal. My humble room will better suit you than this. There, my good, Christian landlady will attend you, and I can always be near. Will you permit yourself to be removed?"

He had cautioned her before not to speak, and she answered, with a slight nod, and a look of thankfulness.

"Then to-morrow I will have you taken to my room," he continued. "I want to see you restored to health with no fears for the future."

Again she thanked him with a look, and he felt a strange thrill penetrate his heart. Presently she fell into another sleep, through which he narrowly watched her.

When morning came he found her quite comfortable, and left her couch to visit some hospital patients who demanded his attention.

In the lower hall he encountered the landlady.

"Got the cholera, has she?" cried the woman, her face wearing a frightened look.

"Yes."

"Didn't Gratz say so, too? I tell you, sir, that Gratz is a knowin' fellow, but uncommonly reckless. But say, doctor, I don't want the cholera in my house. I'm dreadful afraid that Gratz will bring it here some day; indeed I am."

"Alice is not going to remain with you," he said.

The hostess opened her large eyes.

"I am going to remove her to my own room. She would surely die in the one she now occupies."

"Gratz says the room is an excellent one for a cholera patient."

"It is—to kill her."

Then Oscar hurried from the house.

Presently he returned with good aid, and, with the greatest care, his patient was carried to his own room and placed on his couch.

Mrs. Clyde, his kind-hearted landlady, kindly volunteered to attend to the fair pa-

occupied it. Alice was asleep, and he had covered her face to keep the night insects from stinging it. Slowly the seconds passed to him, and he had bowed his head upon the bed that he might hear the beating of the heart.

And in that position he sent implorations heavenward, that the crisis might result auspiciously.

At last the critical moment was past, and he gently uncovered her face.

A cry of joy almost burst from his lips. His prayers had been answered—she would live! It was one case out of a thousand, for recoveries after collapse are exceedingly rare.

He breathed freer and called Mrs. Clyde in. Together they watched Alice, who opened her eyes at last.

"Hush, Alice," said Oscar, noticing that she was exerting herself to speak. "Lie still. The crisis is over, and you will live, thank heaven."

And she did live, although it was a long time before her health was fully restored. When that happy time came, Oscar Leslie declared his holy passion, and was permitted to fold her to his heart.

One beautiful day, after the terrible scourge had abated in the Crescent City, a happy couple stood before the hymeneal altar, and the doctor's patient became the doctor's wife.

Then away to the North and a pleasant home in New Hampshire; for the young physician was now possessed of means.

Living yet, they are happy. Why should they not be? "Little Anna," now a beautiful woman, lives with them.

The Banker's Ward:

OR,
The Shadowy Terror of Arrancourt.

BY GEO. S. KAIME.

CHAPTER VII.

ONE WOMAN'S HEART.

MOSES MARTIN was startled by the unexpected appearance of Henry Vinton.

"Ella!" he gasped. "She has gone!"

"What!" cried the father, jumping to his feet.

Henry told him in a few words all that he knew, not sparing his own perfidy.

"Arrancourt is accursed!" moaned the sorrow-stricken father. "There's nothing but misery here!"

Then he calmed himself, and calling the negroes, ordered them to search the grounds, while he and Henry sprang into the saddle, and spurred their horses toward the lake.

Dora stood at the window looking out at the smoking torches moving here and there, held by the negroes looking like so many demons just from Hades.

"They have not found her," she muttered, as she saw the lights all coming toward the mansion, and heard her father's voice ordering out every horse on the place. "And they will not find her, alive. But I must go down and simulate grief. Bah! how can I, when my whole being is alive with joy? Grief? ha! ha!"

She found a sorrowful scene in the great kitchen. The old negroes, every one of whom almost worshipped Ella, were bewailing her loss in the extravagant style peculiar to them. Some were sobbing and wringing their hands, some shouting, some screaming, and all moving hither and thither, making a horrible din; while near the door stood her father and Henry, stern and silent, waiting for the horses.

She made her way to her father's side.

"You have not found her?" said she, in a subdued voice.

"Not yet," replied Mr. Martin, taking her hand. "You must go back with the master, my child. We will do every thing that can be done, and I think we shall soon bring her home."

"Oh, father! I fear that you may never find dear sister again!" sobbed Dora, bursting into a flood of tears, that effectually removed every unpleasant impression from Henry's mind.

"Do not despair, Dora," said he, going over to her side. "We shall soon have her safe back."

"God grant that you may!" said Dora, looking up to him through the glistening tears; "but something tells me, Henry, that I shall never see her again!"

And Henry, again under the spell of her magical charms, pressed his lips to hers in one long, lingering kiss.

With a face all aglow with triumph, Dora flew back to the library and stationed herself at the window.

"Oh, if they should find her now," she whispered, trembling at the thought. "They must not! They shall not!"

She hastened to her sister's room, and eagerly tore a strip from the shawl which Ella had worn.

"I'll find her now," she said, smiling wickedly.

She went out to the kennels. "Prince! Prince! Here, Prince!" she called, and a great bloodhound, savage and grim, came bounding toward her, and licked her hand.

"Good fellow! Do you want a chase? I know you do. Scent this!"

She held the piece of her sister's garment to his nose, and with a low whine he started for the gate.

"Eager, are you?" said Dora. "So am I, old fellow. Let me open the gate."

She swung open the wicket, and away bounded the sleuth-hound, with his nose scenting the ground.

He circled round the mansion, moving this way and that, at first puzzled; but at length he started off on a straight line through the park.

"Go!" hissed Dora. "Hunt her to the death! Tear her in pieces, that she may never cross my path again! Ha! ha! Prince will find her, and he knows no mercy—find her, Henry Vinton, long before your fleetest horses can come up with her. And what a sight it will be for you!"

She waited until the deep baying of the hound was no longer audible. Then she went back into the house to watch and wait for the sleuth-hound's return, and exult over her triumph.

CHAPTER VIII.

A FRIEND INDEED.

THE assassins were too eager to make quick work with Paul Rodney. They missed their mark entirely. Their knives clashed together as they went down, throwing them both aside, and waking Paul. He



THE DOCTOR'S PATIENT.

to get a good view of his face in the dim light afforded by the hall-lamp.

"Yes, I am Oscar Leslie, the doctor."

"Then, sir, will you please to come to our house right away? We are terribly afraid that one of our boarders has got the cholera."

"Where do you live?"

"On Tremont street, in the two-story frame boarding-house, right opposite the brewery."

"I will go with you, my little girl," responded Oscar. "God forbid that I should refuse to visit a suffering fellow-creature. Stand still while I run back and get my case."

He left the child on the step and returned to his room. He soon rejoined her ready to aid the sick with the proper remedies.

"Now, daughter, lead me to your house," he said, taking the little hand. "Tremont is a new street for me, and I do not think I could find it alone after dark. Your boarder is very sick, is he not?"

"Oh, sir, it is a woman."

"A woman?"

"Yes, sir. She came from Massachusetts, I believe, a year ago."

"Is she a young woman?" inquired the physician, anxious to gain some information about his new patient.

"Yes, sir, and so kind," replied the girl.

"She has taught me a good many things, and I think so much of her! Oh, doctor, I fear the cholera will kill her; it is killing so many nowadays in the city."

The young man saw that his little guide really loved the object of her solicitude, and he hastened to tell her that he thought her fears groundless.

The child was very thankful for his kind words, and vowed that she would ever love him if he restored her friend to health.

Street after street they traversed, until the girl paused before a long building, which had, doubtless, been erected prior to the Revolutionary war.

"This is the place, is it?" said Oscar, looking up at the antique structure.

"Yes; here is where we keep boarders," responded the girl, as she broke from him and bounded up the decaying wooden steps to the door.

She gave the bell several quick jerks, and the result was that the door was partially opened.

"It is me, mother."

"Did you find the doctor?"

"Yes; he is with me."

"Come in, then."

barbed shaft to a vital part, for the young girl suddenly awoke.

She looked at him, and did not recognize him as a physician, for she said in a feeble voice:

"Is that you, Mr. Gratz?"

"No, miss," answered the doctor. "I am not Mr. Gratz. I am Doctor Leslie. The lady's little daughter come for me, and I accompanied her hither."

"Poor little Anna, how she loves me!" sighed the sick one.

"How do you feel now?" asked Oscar.

In a few words she described her present state, and he took a thorough diagnosis of the case.

"Mr. Gratz left some remedies," she said; "but, they come far short of having the desired effect."

Oscar left the sufferer's side, and stepped across the apartment to the bureau, upon which he had noticed several vials. A short but thorough investigation of their contents told him that Gratz knew nothing about cholera remedies, and, raising the sash, he dashed the medicine into the street.

Then he prepared some which, in other cases, had arrested the progress of the terrible epidemic, and administered it to his beautiful patient. His next movement was to draw a chair up to the couch and seat himself in it, to watch the effect of the dose.

Presently the patient dropped gently into a calm sleep, and Oscar knew that the remedy was having the usual effect. Thanks to its soporific virtues, she would slumber for several hours, and the young disciple of Esculapius eased himself in the chair, and began to study her features.

In all his practice, he thought, he had had no lovelier patient.

"She must not die!" he murmured. "If medicine can drive the terrible malady from her frame it must do it. She is too innocent, too beautiful, to become the cholera's victim."

There was a rap on the door. The doctor rose and approached it.

"Who is there?" he demanded, in a low voice.

"Me—little Anna. Can I not come in, doctor, and see Miss Alice? Indeed, I'll be real still."

"No, Anna," replied Oscar, firmly but kindly.

"Why?"

"You might disturb her, for she is sleeping just now."

"But, tell me, doctor, has she got the cholera?"

tient during his professional absence. The widow did not fear the disease, for she possessed its best preventives—a fearless discharge of duty without regard to the future, and a clear conscience before God and man."

For several days Alice improved, and, at last, Oscar pronounced her convalescent.

Then he listened to her story.

As little Anna had said, she was a native of Massachusetts, and had come South seeking a school. Reaching New Orleans, her funds became exhausted, and she did not find the employment she sought. When she was despairing she obtained a copyist's situation, for almost starvation wages; but, in the humble house of Mrs. Durant, she managed to eke out a living.

Her story drew her nearer the young physician's heart, and he loved her as he had never loved before.

Often he was on the point of declaring his unbounded adoration, but he forced the declaration back, and vowed that he would wait until she was well.

With coming days the scourge obtained a firmer foothold in the Crescent City, and Oscar could spend but few hours at the bedside of the woman he loved.



jumped to his feet, and dealt blows right and left.

But the robbers were not disposed to relinquish their prey. They saw that Paul had no weapons, and taking courage, they rushed upon him with their knives, pressing him hard. He fought desperately, and might have conquered eventually; but a fourth person appeared unexpectedly, and the click of his pistol sent the robbers off in a hurry.

"Upon my soul, you stood them a good fight," said Charles Matthews. "Are you hurt?"

"Not in the least, thanks to you," said Paul. "I owe you my life."

"I am not so sure of that," said the banker, with a smile. "You would have whipped the curs, but not without some ugly cuts, perhaps; so I will take all the credit that is my due. My name is Charles Matthews."

"Mine is Paul Rodney. I was on my way to Willhampton, and these rascals fell upon me while I was asleep."

"Willhampton is my home, Mr. Rodney. I have a carriage in the road, and why not make the rest of your journey with me?"

"With pleasure," said Paul, frankly.

"How far to Willhampton?" asked Paul, after they were seated in the carriage.

"But a few miles now. We shall be there in two hours or less."

"So near! I should have kept on."

"Then you really intended to make a night of it?" asked the banker, with an amused smile.

"I certainly should, Mr. Matthews, if I had not been disturbed."

"If I had been in your situation," said the banker, laughingly, "I should thank the prowling thieves for waking me, though I can not say that I particularly admire the mode."

Paul laughed good-humoredly.

"I assure you, Mr. Matthews, that I never slept better. I have passed many a night in worse places."

"You must have seen something of the rough side of life, Mr. Rodney."

"More than I hope to again," said Paul, earnestly.

"If not painful to you, I shall be pleased to listen to an account of some of your adventures," said Mr. Matthews, quite charmed with the young man's manner.

Paul readily complied, giving a cursory sketch of his life, and taking no credit for acts of real heroism.

Mr. Matthews was interested.

"Thank you, Mr. Rodney. I have derived much pleasure. Your errand here reminds me that I have a story."

Thereupon the banker related the facts of Mrs. Morehouse's strange disappearance, and of the finding of Meta. Paul listened in wonder.

"There is an air of romance about this Meta that pleases me," said Paul.

"You are not alone, Mr. Rodney; and I predict more interest yet when you see her."

"Is she very beautiful?"

"Beyond compare," replied the banker, enthusiastically. "She is my pride and my pet. I never before saw a woman in whom were combined such beauty and grace. And she is accomplished, as well."

"You interest me more and more," said Paul, "but I must not lose sight of my duty. Has nothing been heard of the widow Morehouse?"

"Nothing whatever."

"Then my search is but just commenced," said Paul, wearily.

"On the contrary, I think it is ended for the present," said the banker. "It will be useless to attempt to find Mrs. Morehouse. There is a detective working at the case, but he has not yet determined, to a certainty, whether the lady was carried away, or went of her own free will. If he, a man bred to the business, is puzzled, what can you hope?"

"Very true," said Paul, thoughtfully; "yet I feel that something ought to be done. Advise me, Mr. Matthews, for I need it."

"The proper course, as it seems to me," said Mr. Matthews, "is to place the money where it will draw interest, find some employment for yourself, and wait at least until the detective gives up the case or finds the lady. What think you?"

"I rely upon your judgment," replied Paul; "and I can see no better way to act."

"I am in the banking business," continued Mr. Matthews, "and I will take the money if you wish. I have already a small balance in Mrs. Morehouse's favor. And I will give you employment, Mr. Rodney. I shall have a vacancy at the bank next week."

"But I have no references, Mr. Matthews," said Paul, much surprised.

"I ask none but those you have already given me, Mr. Rodney. I feel sure that I shall not find my confidence misplaced."

"Thank you, Mr. Matthews," said Paul, with considerable feeling. "It has troubled me more than a little to know what I should find to do."

"Then we will consider that matter settled, Mr. Rodney. You will make my house your home while you are with me, which I hope will be a long time."

"I shall strive to do my duty in whatever capacity I am placed," said Paul.

"I feel sure of it, Mr. Rodney. Here we are at home."

CHAPTER IX.

A SCOWL-SHADOW.

THE banker was not expected home until late in the night, and George volunteered to wait up for him. He looked inquiringly at the tall, sailor-like figure of Paul Rodney, and the banker, seeing the look, introduced him at once, adding:

"He takes Goldthwaite's place."

The greeting was not cordial, although Paul strove to make it so; and when the banker requested George to show Paul to his room, he complied with a very bad grace.

"You have decided to try life upon the land?" said George, glancing at Paul's coarse garb. "Have you followed the sea for any considerable time?"

Paul saw the covert sneer, but he chose to ignore it.

"I have crossed it twice."

"Neither sailor nor landsman, then?"

"Both, or neither," replied Paul, good-humoredly. "I have led a roving life so far, but Mr. Matthews offered me a situation, and I accepted."

"I should think that you would feel almost afraid to try it. My uncle is very exacting."

"He is also just, I hope."

"Yes," replied George, feeling the rebuke, but loth to admit it; "Goldthwaite hardly suited him; I hope you will succeed better."

"Thank you," said Paul. "I hope I shall succeed."

And this was the commencement of George's enmity toward Paul Rodney. He hardly knew why he had conceived the dislike. There was no tangible reason for it. It was simply a presentiment that this tall stranger would, in some way, prove inimical to his interests.

In the morning Paul met the banker's wife for the first time. She was yet a beautiful woman, and the young man felt that reverence for her, which a life of compulsory exclusion from the society of woman always begets. With a gallantry and sincerity which could give no offense, he bent down from his great height, and kissed her brow.

"I never knew a mother," said he, sadly.

The good woman never forgot this simple act. She never knew a son, and this great, noble-looking man, seemed more like one than any person she had ever met.

Meta now entered the dining-room, and Paul took in her queenly beauty at a glance. He bowed before her with a native grace seldom equaled by the most polished courtier. George looking on the while, with lowering brows, for he knew then why he disliked Paul Rodney.

Without being aware of it himself, Paul was a skillful narrator, and he entertained his listeners very agreeably during breakfast. The banker was well satisfied, but George, although forced to acknowledge his merits, was more than ever disposed to look upon him as an intruder.

After the meal the banker very delicately pressed a sum of money upon Paul, which was frankly accepted; for he well knew that his present appearance was not in keeping with his changed prospects. He was busy nearly all day effecting the transformation, which, when finished, left him looking very little like the Paul Rodney that the banker found battling with the robbers.

As it wanted an hour or two to dinner time, Paul strolled down to the beach. Beneath the shade of jutting rocks he sat down, and while he watched the waves beating at his feet, he wondered if indeed his misfortunes were over. Then he thought of the pleasant people he had fallen among, and of the charming Meta. In all his life he had never thought seriously of love or marriage. Both seemed too far off—something like the end of life—to be troubling his mind; but that was all changed. In an instant it had become a question of the present. He had found some one to live for, and strive for; and he felt that a failure in this would be worse, tenfold, than any misfortune he had yet met.

Out in the bay was George Matthews, rowing toward the beach. Paul saw and recognized him, but he could not make out the two ladies in the boat with him. He kept his eye on them, yet busily thinking of his own affairs. He saw George push bravely into the surf, handling the oars with a skillful hand. Turning away for a moment, he did not witness the mishap, but when he looked again all three were struggling in the water.

He was on his feet in an instant, and hastening to the rescue.

When George felt the oars break in his hand, and knew that the boat must surely capsize, he turned his attention to the ladies. He bravely threw an arm around each, and by great exertion kept them afloat, but he could make no headway. One of the helpless beings must be left to drown. Which should it be? He looked into the patient face of his aunt Matthews, and his conscience said, *no—no*. He turned to the beautiful Meta, and his heart whispered *no*. Yet he felt that his strength was failing him—that he was slowly but surely giving up to exhaustion. Just then Paul Rodney's shaggy head appeared above the crest of a wave. With vigorous strokes, he soon reached the imperiled trio.

"You have done nobly, George," said he,

relieving him of Mrs. Matthews, and boldly striking out for shore. "Follow me if you can! At all events keep the lady's head above water. I will return soon."

As is often the case, there was not a boat within reach, and the people collected on the shore were passive spectators. Paul, however, was equal to the task. He needed no help. His Herculean strength, united with a perfect knowledge of the art of swimming, took him safely to the beach with his helpless burden. Scarcely feeling the exertion, he was ready to plunge in again.

George was struggling heroically, but he was too nearly exhausted to make any progress. Paul's welcome face again appeared, and soon he was on the return, with Meta in his care.

George, relieved of the dead weight, now kept up with Paul, and together they reached the land in safety.

Paul shook the sea-water from his hair, and, with a smile, took the other's outstretched hand.

"An unexpected bath, Mr. Matthews, but I really feel the better for it. How are the ladies?"

"As well as ever, thank you, Paul," said the banker's wife.

"Why, my dear madam, you were not one of them?" exclaimed Paul, surprised exceedingly. "I never even looked at your faces."

"I must say I like that," said Meta, who overheard his last remark. "Who ever heard of such a thing! It is too bad!"

And she held up her hands deprecatingly.

"I shall never be guilty of such negligence again," said Paul, with an earnest look, and a smile that seemed to light up his whole being.

"See that you do not, sir," said Meta, gayly. Then, in a more serious tone, she said:

"I thank you, Mr. Rodney, for my life."

"And I thank God that I was placed near to be of service to you," said Paul, fervently.

George stood but a few steps from them, silent and moody. The shadow of Paul's presence was already falling about him.

Paul guessed something of his thoughts, and felt pained that he had been the cause.

"Come, George," said he, pleasantly, "the ladies are waiting to thank you for your bravery. Had it not been for your presence of mind, at the time of the mishap, I fear that we should not have been blessed with this happy termination."

"Yes, George," said his aunt; "we owe our safety equally to you and Mr. Rodney."

And Meta softened a little as she thanked him.

The carriage was waiting, and the party got in and were driven home.

CHAPTER X.

THE HOUND OF FATE.

FLEEING through the night-solitude, fleeing from a danger that she knew not of, fleeing from a wily foe that should have been a dear friend, fleeing from the misery of a broken heart, Ella Martin kept on.

There was but one settled purpose in view: to escape the sight of Henry's perfidy, and her sister's treachery. There was no anger in her heart for either; only a devouring, maddening grief that goaded her on, unmindful of results.

She scarcely thought of the wrong she was doing her father; but, as the soft night-air cooled her throbbing temples, she grew much calmer, and looked less excitedly upon the situation. She would have turned back then rather than bring sorrow upon her poor father, but she heard the deep baying of Dora's avenger tracking his prey.

"The bloodhound is on my track!" she whispered, with white lips. "He will tear me in pieces! Oh, they might have spared me this! It is Dora—it is my sister! God pity her—and me!"

She was paralyzed with horror for a moment. Then she ran wildly on to escape the horrible death.

Beyond, through the trees, she could see the silver surface of the lake, lighted by the rays of the moon which was well up in the heavens.

"There is safety," she thought. "There is happiness—there is rest—eternal rest, if I can but reach it!"

The hound's deep baying was growing more and more distinct, spurring her to renewed exertion.

"Oh, mercy, I shall not escape!" she cried; "he is almost here!"

Yet she kept on.

The water was right before her—a haven of rest. A few short moments and she would be safe.

"Oh, my God! I hear the footsteps in the leaves!" she wailed, in despair. "He will overtake me! Oh, what a death! Oh, Henry! Oh, Dora! Oh, father! don't you hear me call?"

The hound saw Ella, and raising his head from the ground, he gave a yelp of satisfaction, and bounded toward her.

She heard him, and with a short prayer for mercy, she made one more effort to reach the water. There was but a step to the verge of the jutting rock—but a step into eternity. But even that was preferable to the fate behind her. How she shuddered at the thought of the growling and snarling, and the gnashing of teeth.

For a second she hesitated ere she took

the death-leap; and, in that brief time, the sleuth-hound cleared the space between, and with a bound bore her to the ground.

CHAPTER XI.

PLAYING WITH FIRE.

IN the gray of the morning Dora saw her father and Henry Vinton returning from their search. She felt no qualms of conscience when she saw that Ella was not with them; in place of sorrow, she felt joy. The life that she should have cherished, she had offered upon the altar of her ambition.

She hastened down to meet them.

"Go tell her, Henry," said the despairing father. "Oh, my poor child!"

Henry rode up to where Dora was waiting for them, and alighted.

"We have not found her, Dora."

His tone was one of utter hopelessness, and Dora read it.

"Oh, Henry!" she exclaimed, bursting into tears, for they seemed always at command. "My darling sister! Where can she be? What did she mean? Oh, I never can forgive myself! yet I could not give you up, Henry."

During that night-ride, Henry Vinton had been reviewing his life for the few months just passed, and the record was unsatisfactory. He resolved that, whatever might come, he would no more perjure his soul by such conduct, unworthy of a man. The loss of Ella opened his eyes to the fact that she was all in all to him, and Dora nothing. Dora, with all her beauty, couldn't fill the void in his heart. Her dazzling brilliancy might, for a time, obscure that true passion which he felt for Ella, but only for a brief space. This knowledge, showing him how culpable had been his actions, determined his true course.

"Dora," said he, looking down into her lustrous eyes with a steady gaze that told her the worst was coming, "I have wronged you and your sister, and this night's work has shown me the path that I must take to make the only reparation within my power. I have long loved your sister, but your beauty and your kindness to my father, have sometimes led me from Ella's side to your own. Yet all the while I was at heart true to Ella. I never can return that love which you have confessed for me. Deeply as it may pain you to hear, and me to say it, I yet believe that you will thank me for it."

Dora listened without once interrupting him, yet the words were like daggers to her heart. She loved Henry Vinton with all the ardor of her Southern nature, and would risk life, yes, even a hope of hereafter, for a pledge that her love was returned. But for all this, the loss of Arrancourt was tenfold worse. Ambition first, and love next.

His manner convinced her that no fair means would accomplish her ends, and she answered without any attempt at concealment:

"Henry Vinton, you taunt me with having confessed my love. I do not deny it, neither can I retract. You may say that I am unwomanly, but remember that I have a man to battle against, and I must use the means that I have. I did love you, Henry. It grew upon me every day, and became a part of my being. I strove to win you, but strove too hard. Had I scorned you as you deserved, you would now be at my feet, begging for one word of love. But I could not; neither can I let you go."

"Dora, you know not what you say!" said Henry, alarmed at her vehemence, and troubled by the look with which she regarded him.

"I repeat," said she, slowly and firmly, "that I can not give you up. I shall hold you until death calls one of us away."

He stared in blank surprise, wondering if this could be the gentle, kind-hearted Dora of former times—this woman with flashing eyes, burning face and grating teeth. And he recoiled with a strange fear creeping over him.

"Dora, are you mad?" he exclaimed.

"Have you lost your senses that you talk thus after what I have said?"

"I hold you if you hate me!" she replied, in a voice that sounded like the hissing of a serpent. "And you dare not attempt to break the bonds."

"Dare not, Dora?"

"Ay, dare not, Henry Vinton. You shall make me your wife!"

"Never!" said Henry, haughtily; for this woman was appearing in her true light, and her very beauty was becoming hateful. "Now I know that you are only seeking my father's wealth."

"And I will have it!" she replied, coldly.

"Dare you tell me this, Dora?"

"I dare any thing to attain my ends, Henry Vinton."

They stood facing each other, he with a look of loathing that he made no attempt to conceal, she with an eye flashing with triumph—hot, pitiless and cunning.

"Do you consent?" she asked, tapping the grass with her little foot.

"Never! never!"

"Then," said Dora, turning toward the house, "the world shall know what happened beyond the seas; and the proud heir of Arrancourt shall hide his head in shame."

"Good God! you do not mean that?" exclaimed Henry, grasping her arm, while his body seemed shrinking with fear at the threat.

"I do mean it!" she replied, with a hollow, grating laugh, that went rasping through his brain painfully. "Only two things can close my mouth; death or marriage. The first you do not dare; the last, you must and shall do."

Henry staggered against the wall of the mansion.

"Mercy!" he gasped, she looked so much like a pitiless fiend.

"I know no such word," she said, coldly. "There are but two in my vocabulary—ambition and love. All others I have blotted out for the present."

"Dora, you will kill me with your cursed madness. I know not what secret you hold, but its shadow has hovered over me for years."

"Your death will affect me but little, Henry Vinton. Whenever you choose to go, do not hesitate on my account. You can not take the wealth with you."

"Fiend! Devil!" he exclaimed.

"Spare your insults, sir," she said, haughtily. "They do not move me."

"Will any thing move you? Gold?"

"The whole or none, Henry Vinton. You have my answer and further words are useless."

She turned to go into the house, but he placed himself in her way.

"Not yet," he said, determinedly. "I must know the ground I stand upon. I must know how soon you demand this sacrifice. You will give me time to prepare."

"Certainly. It would not be proper, so soon after my sister's death."

"Death? A murderess, too?"

"No, Henry Vinton. I am free from that crime. You alone must bear the guilt of my sister's death. Your perfidy drove her away, a suicide."

Henry was now as calm as she. It was the calmness of despair. He looked her steadily in the eye, but she met his gaze without flinching.

"It is false, Dora Martin," he said, in slow, measured tones. "If Ella is dead, you murdered her!"

She flashed upon him a look of hatred that chilled him.

"Dead or not—murdered by me or by you, it does not alter the fact that you are in my power."

Henry turned away with a shudder, and Dora went into the house smiling triumphantly.

All through the day the search was continued, but no traces of Ella were found; and all day long Dora waited for the return of her bloodhound, but he did not come.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 22.)

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43. Nelly Bly Songster.

The Double Escape.

BY ROGER STARBUCK.

FROM childhood Harvey Merrill had shown a fondness for adventure, which, as he grew older, developed into a strong desire for a sea life.

Physically, as well as by inclination, he was fitted for a sailor.

A little above the medium height, he was broad-shouldered, deep-chested, thin in the flanks, with strong, flexible limbs, which had often enabled him, during his boyish sports, to venture where few had cared to follow.

His father being a man of influence, finally procured him a midshipman's warrant aboard the sloop-of-war *Phenix*, of Boston, in which vessel, after performing two cruises, he returned to his native city, with the promise, of promotion from the captain by whom he was much liked.

The youth was now nearly twenty years of age, although his brown cheek, well-developed figure and air, made him seem a few years older. His neat uniform became him well, and as some young ladies are influenced by a man's attire and its effects, many who, in his younger days, had not noticed him particularly, now bestowed upon him those soft glances of interest, which, from time immemorial, have played such mischief with the masculine heart.

Harvey, however, while polite to them all, remained indifferent until there appeared among them a little brunette of seventeen with a round face and form, and soft, dark eyes, which she would turn up in a peculiarly tender way at him, from under her arched brows.

He fancied himself deeply in love with her. The consequences was that before he had sailed on his next voyage, each had "plighted faith"—swearing by the stars to remain true.

Harvey went to sea, believing himself the happiest of men, and not a little proud in the idea that, as much as Clara Morn (her name) had seen of society, he was the first man who had awakened the passion of love in that gentle heart.

In fact, the consciousness of this increased almost to conceit the self-esteem of this youth, who had hitherto been remarked for his modesty.

"She loves me so," he would think to himself, "that it would kill her were she to lose me."

Six months out, while the *Phenix* was bounding through the far-distant waters of the North sea, a terrific gale pounded suddenly upon her, tearing her lighter canvas to shreds, and almost snapping her masts from the caps. For three days and nights, with battered-down hatches, she tore along, shrouded in the black-and-white mists of wave and storm rack.

"If Clara could see me now," thought Harvey, when, after attending to the performance of some hazardous duty, he would hang swinging like a pendulum from the lofty yard-arm, or bend far over from the plunging boom, "how her poor little heart would shrink with fright and dread. In imagination she perhaps does see me now! Never can she forget me!"

On the fourth day, the storm having subsided, two men and a young girl were picked up, clinging to a spar.

Two were Norwegians, one, Olrof, by name, was a Spaniard. In imperfect English they stated that their vessel—a schooner—loaded with fish for Liverpool—had gone down in the gale, all perishing but these three. One was an old man—the father of the girl—the other his first mate.

Every kindness was shown to the sufferers, so that Christina—the name of the girl—rapidly recovered her bloom. Such beauty as hers was indeed rare. Tall, lithe and light-haired, she reminded Harvey of one of those pictures of the Scandinavian queens which he had once seen among a collection of old paintings. Gentle and humble, she was the very opposite of Clara, and yet, ere long, Harvey felt sure he loved her best. The opportunities for conversing with her were many, and Harvey found his heart enthralled by the fair Norwegian, whose sweet, broken English, joined to her purity and naivete, were irresistible.

He did not fail to notice that Olrof, her father's mate, would watch her and him with sour aspect, the reason of which he soon ascertained to be that the former wanted her for a wife.

Had Harvey a right to try to win Christina's affections, after he had plighted faith with another?

Certainly not: so he kept apart from her. The consequence was that the girl grew sad. Her father questioned her. With the naivete and childish confidence natural to the Norwegian damsel, this one then frankly acknowledged to her father that she loved Harvey.

"And so you do not care for Olrof?"

"I never told him I did. He wanted me, and you wanted me to have him. I thought it was all right, until I saw that other!"

To Olrof the father related this. The mate made no response, but his moody brow boded no good.

Finally the sloop-of-war, which was bound for the Arctic, put into a bay, not far from the Lofoden Islands, for repairs. The homes of the Norwegian castaways were but a few miles from here, which was one reason why the sloop's captain had preferred going into this bay, instead of one further to the south.

Harvey's resolution to keep away from Christina told upon him. He grew pale and thin.

One evening, at about dusk, he was wandering moodily along the sea-shore, within sight of her house—a little one-story house, with a red-tiled roof—when he was set upon by three men, one of whom he at once recognized as Olrof. They threw him down, and fastening him with ropes to the fragment of an old skiff, they set him adrift, with the current rushing along toward the dangerous Maelstrom.

"There!" screamed Olrof, "go to your fate, and leave me to win my bride!"

So saying, he vanished behind the rocks with his companions.

Meanwhile there was the current drawing Harvey nearer and nearer to the mad vortex. He could hear it more distinct every moment, could see the lightning-like flash of the white waters as they circled round and round in one great tremendous mass. His fate seemed inevitable: he would be dashed to pieces against the rocks of the storm before being drawn under!

A brief, silent prayer rose from his heart. His speed was now so great that his brain grew dizzy, and he could scarcely think.

Nearer and nearer to the vortex. It was sounding the knell of his doom—he must perish!

"But who is that who now darts in a skiff from round the angle of a near rock?"

It is a woman! Even in that faint light he recognizes Christina!

She sweeps alongside of him. She helps him into the skiff.

What of that? Can she resist the fearful current?

She does so; one end of her skiff is by a net-rope attached to a spur of the rock round which she came. Upon this rope she pulls the boat to the rocky strand. Harvey is saved. The explanation was brief. Afloat in her father's fisher skiff, she had seen the young man set adrift by his enemies, and had thus been able to make ready for his rescue.

"Better you had let me go," said Harvey, sadly, and there and then he told her of the one to whom he had plighted faith. The tall, queenly figure drooped like a lily; the whole frame trembling showed how deep was the girl's suffering.

She took him ashore, within reach of his sloop which was to sail the next morning.

"Go!" she said. "You must keep your word with the American girl!"

The next moment, with a sob, she had darted off.

"She was right," thought Harvey; "poor Clara would die were I to marry another!"

He returned to the sloop, feeling that his hopes in this world were ruined forever.

A year later the *Phenix* anchored in Boston Harbor. Passing through the street, thinking to himself what a miserable man he was, and asking himself if it would be right for him to make poor Clara still believe he loved her, he saw a lady and gentleman moving along, arm-in-arm, on the other side of the way. The lady was Clara—and the gentleman, as he learned on reaching his father's, was—her husband!

He was a millionaire, and for that reason Clara had broken her faith with Harvey, who now breathed a deep sigh of relief, although it must be acknowledged that his self-esteem received a blow.

Christina's image remained in his heart. Two years later he went to Norway, and found her still single.

Poor child; her's was a different nature from Clara's. She could never take up with another, although tempting offers had been made her.

Meanwhile Olrof had gone away—and been drowned at sea.

Harvey straightway made Christina happy by marrying her and taking her with him to America.

With one of her affectionate nature he was indeed blessed, and he never failed to thank heaven for his double escape, and his marriage with one in whom he can never cease to love.

Cruiser Crusoe!

LIFE ON A TROPIC ISLE.

BY LAFAYETTE LAFOREST.

NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR.

My mind soon recovered its tone, when, as a relief from the confinement of the boat, I began padding on the reef, picking up fish, and amusing myself with the gambols of my dog. But not for long, as a chill, which went to my bones, warned me of a change of wind and a coming storm.

To set my sails was useless. My poor canoe would have been submerged in a moment. To attempt to land in the furious surf of a rocky island, while the wind was blowing a gale, would have been equally impolitic. But here it came, and there was nothing to be done but face it. The gloomy clouds above, the general darkness of the day, and the total darkness of the water, made the storm seem worse than it was; but as it was, it was bad enough.

First, from due north came a cavern-like break in the clouds, through which the wind, hidden with the ice and storms of the far-distant pole, might almost be seen pouring with steady and angry violence; then, underneath the sky, appeared what seemed

a second horizon, so black, clear and defined was it.

This was a bank.

When the angry wind pours its fury on the placid waters, before it lashes itself up to a full conviction of its own power and vastness, and sends the waves towering and toppling mountains high, it raises as it goes a dark fore-running wave, that hisses and rolls like the surf on a sandy shore, changing the mirror-like surface of the water to bubbles and billows.

Seizing hold of the rudder, I turned the boat round, stern to the wind, as, had the storm taken her on her broadside, she must have capsized. The next minute I was riding on the boiling, seething, crackling, hissing and tearing waves, my whole energy being devoted to keeping the canoe straight before the wind.

It was no easy task, for as we flew—the billows from behind increasing in size and force every instant—it was with difficulty I prevented my canoe from being pooped, which was the danger, which, in the first part of this strange and eventful history, was described as being incident to running before the wind.

It is this wise. The waves came swelling up behind much faster than the boat could fly before the wind, and as a rule passed by, or rather under, after heaving the canoe right up on their summit; but now, instead of merely rising and falling, they were so elevated as to comb over, and had one of these fallen onto my stern-sheets, all would have been over in a moment. I did not dare look back, except with the most hurried glances, my whole attention being devoted to keeping the little craft dead before the wind, even a slight deviation from that course being likely to be fatal.

How long I flew before the blast, what hours came and faded away, what agonies I endured, how many times I appeared to die, and then to revive once more, I can not say; but I imagine that the storm lasted at least forty-eight hours, during which time I did not sleep at all. Exhausted nature could no further sustain the struggle, when the huge black canopy of the heavens seemed rent in twain, the blue sky peered through clear and bright, the sun danced merrily on the waters, and the wind gradually ceased.

But it was a long time before there was any advantage to me. After a severe storm the sea is more dangerous than during its continuance, the waves bobbing and tossing you about in the most impolite and unmerciful manner. My eyes were constantly on the rack, as I could scarcely keep them open—until at last the waves were beat down by a heavy and refreshing shower.

Then, eating a mouthful or two, and drinking some water, I lay down and sought, beside my dog, that rest and slumber of which I was so painfully in need. It was scarcely evening when I went to sleep. It was long past sunrise when I awoke.

What a change! Not a speck of cloud, not a ripple on the wide ocean, that heaved lazily under the burning sun, as if wearied by the Titanic contest, in which wind and water are never victors one over the other. The air was hot, fiery, scorching, so that my first impulse was to drink.

Not a drop of water was on board the boat.

During the furious tempest, I had emptied the keg, while the gourds and calabashes had cracked, and spilt every drop of liquid.

There remained nothing whatever to do, but to subsist upon the contents of the cocoanuts, until I could make land. But then the fearful conviction came, like a flash of lightning to my mind, that not a speck of land was in sight, nothing but that fearful sky and water, and that awful sun peering down upon me like a huge eye of fire, and scorching me to the very bones.

My first task was to step my mast, and then hoist my sail in such a way as to give me some shelter. This certainly was an improvement, but no one out of the tropics can conceive the intensity of the heat which is experienced in those latitudes, with the sun above your head and not a breath of wind.

At twelve o'clock, the boat cast no shadow on the waters. The sun was vertical above, plunging its torrid rays fiercely, awfully below.

With nothing to quench my thirst, but the contents of the cocoanuts, it became necessary to lean over in the boat and bathe my hands and face, than which no better way can be conceived of checking the thirst in its earlier stages. But with my sailor-boy education, imagine the shock which went to my heart when I saw, close to the canoe, a large bottle-mosed shark steadily swimming round the boat, attended by one or two pilot-fish.

Then I made up my mind that I was about to die, and that these awful scavengers of the deep knew it. There is always a slight delirium attendant on thirst, so that the mind is unusually affected. Be this as it may, I leaned back in my boat, and then caught the eye of my dog; he was looking at me with a fixed and earnest glance. His paws were stretched out, his mouth open, his eyes red, fixed and staring, while he panted horribly from the excessive heat, and from intensity of thirst.

My God!—there could be no doubt about it, the creature was going mad.

I felt sick unto death, but searching in my belt for a knife, determined to make some defense. To be bit by the poor canine friend that had stuck to me so long, was a

horrible idea—and I knew not which to prefer, the alternative of being torn to pieces by sharks, or dying slowly of starvation, thirst, and rabies.

A whole coconut was close to me. I contrived to open it without spilling a drop. Precious as was the liquor to me, I held it out to Tiger, who lapped it up with singular pleasure and delight.

It was my last.

Awful, dreadful and indescribable sensations now came over me. I believe I laughed and cried alternately, then jumped up in the boat, glared over the side, struck at the shark, and did many other mad and foolish things, such as those who suffer from thirst will do.

Several times the frantic expedient of swimming was thought of, but fortunately, I was too exhausted and weak to undress myself and try the experiment. On sped the day, and still the incessant fever of that arid thirst tormented me. I began to sing—a sure sign that my head was going—when, through my hot eyeballs, I saw the sun go down in such wild and gorgeous splendor as I never care to see again.

The last thing I recollect of that frenzied hour was tossing overboard a lot of my provisions, in the vain hope of propitiating the sharks. Then I fell into a stupefied, heavy slumber, from which I did not wake till midnight.

Then, over the still waters, came rushing the evening breeze, and I welcomed next

"The cloud that burst
Over my wearied bones, and felt delight
In the cold drenching of the stormy night."

A gentle breeze, and one or two smart showers did indeed revive both myself and my dog; and then, by the light of a rude lantern I had manufactured on purpose, I examined my compass, and steered in the direction which I thought right.

At daybreak the burning island was five miles to leeward, and the canoe hurrying along with a good spanking breeze.

The island which I was now rapidly approaching, was arid in the extreme. The shore seemed unapproachable, as the sea rolled in heavy, hoary breakers right up to a wall of lava. Masses of wave-washed stones and masses of broken lava strewn the rude beach beneath. The rocky wall for twenty feet and more above, was honey-combed from the action of the waves.

I sailed slowly on, watching for the first chance of landing, but all the coast was cavernous and precipitous, admitting of no way of being scaled; while every now and then could be seen huge funnel-shaped blow-holes in the rocks along the shore, by which the spray of a great wave, and even stones, would sometimes be ejected with great force, and with a noise much louder, but not at all unlike, a spouting whale.

At length I came in sight of what appeared to be a little bay, or cove.

It was approached by a fissure between two huge rocks, and when I contrived, after letting down my sail, to pole the boat into the narrow channel, I found myself, in a few minutes, in a perfect land-locked bay, the shores of which were entirely covered by stones and ashes, while no poet ever conceived anything more hideous, bleak and desolate.

After eating a scanty meal—in my mad frenzy I had thrown away the greater part of my provisions—I took a gun, and leaving my dog to guard the boat, started on my journey of observation.

No sooner did I set foot upon the shore than I observed in front of me a large and deep subterranean gallery, which appeared to me to lead into the interior of the island. It was evidently an old sluice-way to the sea for some pent-up stock of old lava. It was about fifty feet high at the entrance, and soon became a cavern.

There could be seen the remains of shells and sea-eggs, and many bones, as if it had been inhabited, but not lately, for the whole ground was strewn with rocks that had fallen from the roof in earthquakes, making the bottom of a most jagged and irregular description. The cavern appeared to have no end, and how far it went inland, rock-ribbed and vast, I did not care to examine.

It was an awful place, something like the hall of Eblis, described in *Vathek*. There was nothing beautiful about it, but there was something Titanic and sublime in the silence, gloom and vastness of a place seemingly in the bowels of the earth, where liquid fire had flowed ages ago, and where earthquakes had dislodged vast fragments of rocks from the jagged roof.

As there was no chance of this cavern leading anywhere, I turned back, and began to ascend the slope of the hills toward the eminence whence the smoke still arose. But it was a great deal further off than I expected. Never in my imagination had I conceived any thing so dreary as this spot. After climbing a small ascent I came to an immense field of smooth, flat, unbroken lava. It had evidently once been a huge upland lake of mineral fire, but had suddenly been congealed into a vitreous black rock. The very billows which had been raised on its surface by the wind were congealed in some places in large swells and hollows—in others, resembling the surface of the ocean when calm, just as its surface is ruffled by a light breeze.

It was a dreary plain, "forlorn and wild, the seat of desolation." I hurried on, unable to conceive how at any time this could have been the abode of any human creatures. Passing over this wretched place, where not a living thing, bird, beast or

reptile was to be seen, I could note how the smoke and sulphurous stench from the crater was borne along by the south wind, and now, as I advanced, the lava began to be more decomposed, and the ground cracked and rent into fissures and chasms, from which ascended smoke and vapor, looking as if I had been in some familiar region of smelting furnaces.

Then a little further was a terrace, like a sunken plain, rent by earthquakes, and strewn with great boulders of lava. Then at a distance I saw, not a truncated top of a mountain, with broad, bare, and furrowed sides, but the raised rim of a mighty caldron—a hideous, gaping chasm or fire-pit, about fifteen hundred feet deep, and about ten miles round.

And this was raised about four thousand feet above the level of the sea. I gazed for a moment with an idle, vacant, ecstatic look, and then began to take in the whole scene. About four million square yards of half-cool scoria, hundreds of thousands of square yards of convulsed torrents of earth in fusion of gaseous fluids, effervescing, boiling, spouting in all directions, like the disturbed waves of the ocean, while in the center was the abyss of abysses, the caldron of caldrons, a frightful area of three hundred thousand square yards of bubbling, red-hot lava, now rolling in long, curling waves, now spouting up with terrific fury, and a subterraneous and fearful noise.

Wicoochee, the Seminole.

A TALE OF FLORIDA IN '35.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

ONE cloudless morning in the year of our Lord, eighteen hundred and thirty-five, an Indian stood a short distance beyond the edge of a savanna in Florida. He held the bridles of two horses, and every now and then looked forward anxiously as though he was expecting some one.

He was, by no means, an unprepossessing red-man. His face and body were devoid of paint, and not a mark, save a scar received in honorable warfare, marred the cuticle. From his waist upward he was naked, and his nether limbs were covered by ornamented leggings of dressed doekskin. In his scalp-locks were fastened many a dark feather, from which singular ornament he had received his cognomen—Wicoochee, or Black Feather.

"I do wish that Wananee would return," he murmured, in his own—the Seminole—language, as he stroked the mane of one of the horses. "Perhaps the White Bird has not eaten her morning meal yet? That, and that only, can keep Wananee."

He paused, and shading his eyes with his broad right hand, gazed southward, where a grove loomed up before his vision.

"Wananee comes not yet," he said, in a disappointed monotone. "Yonder are the trees that bear golden balls. They conceal the house of the white man from the eyes of Wicoochee. Before another sun rises they will have no house to hide—nothing but a pile of smoking sticks. The Seminoles have unearthed the hatchet, because the proud pale-face would remove us to sickly lands beyond the Father of Waters. The treaty of Payne's landing was unjust, and, therefore, we repudiate it. We do not, we will not!—listen to its conditions. We do not wish to leave the land the Great Spirit gave us. We are going to rest in the land of our fathers, and our children shall sleep by our sides."

Another look, with shaded vision, and a smile flitted across the Seminole's countenance.

"Two forms are between me and the trees," he cried, straining his eyes to distinguish them. "One is Wananee, and who can the other be but White Bird? To-night her uncle's lodge burns, and the Seminoles will wear scalps at their belts. What would become of Wicoochee if his tribe knew what he was doing? He would be tied to a tree and shot full of arrows. Wicoochee cares not if a deed of gratitude makes him a traitor. He has not forgotten the young pale-face who lives in the city of lawyers."

The Indian's pause was sudden, for the objects of his gaze and solicitude were within a few feet of him.

One was a young and exceedingly beautiful white girl, upon whose golden hair the coronet of her eighteenth year was lightly resting. Her step was light, yet firm, and there was a look of wonderment in her eyes. Her companion, who was a Seminole, bore a very striking resemblance to Wicoochee.

"So the White Bird has accompanied Wananee," said the Indian, speaking English with a fluency which proclaimed him a proficient in the language.

"Yes," answered the white girl. "Wananee found me at the breakfast-table, and I would not accompany her until she had sat at my side and shared my repast. She said that you had an important communication to make to me, and I am anxious to hear it."

From the girl's language it was evident that she was acquainted with the Seminole, which was really the fact.

During the peace which the Seminoles of Florida were about to break, Wicoochee, or Black Feather, had often visited the plantation of Arnold Greycliff. The planter was an imperious gentleman who loved to give orders in a way to make his servants feel their inferiority. His wife, scarcely less

AUGUST.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

haughty than himself, had been an invalid for years, and he had emigrated to Florida from Virginia expecting the climate of the peninsula to restore her to wonted health and strength. "The Colonel," as he was called, was childless; but, Ida Claffin, an orphan and his niece, supplied a daughter's place.

With this perhaps necessary digression, let us resume the thread of our story.

The last word had scarcely left Ida's lips, when Wicoochee replied:

"Wicoochee has something to say to the Colonel's niece. But he will not say it here. Yonder," and he pointed to a forest which bordered the eastern edge of the savanna, "is a spot where Wicoochee will speak."

"Where?" inquired the girl, who did not fully understand the chief.

"In the wood, by the spring."

Ida knew the designated spot.

"Why can you not speak here, Wicoochee?" she asked, fearing that something evil lurked at the bottom of the chief's intentions.

"Because a Seminole might see us," was the strange reply—strange to Ida, who, as yet, knew naught about the unearthing of the hatchet. "White Bird need not fear to enter the forest with Wicoochee, for no harm shall come to her." By the Great Spirit the Seminole swears it.

Then Ida thought that the Indian had a truly important communication to deliver, and she told him that she would hesitate no longer.

Wicoochee smiled and assisted the two girls to mount one of the horses. Then he mounted the other himself, and rapidly they galloped across the savanna toward the timber.

Presently they entered it, when their horses' gait dwindled into a walk. In a short time a shallow stream was crossed, and the trio alighted at the foot of a majestic tree. The animals were allowed to stand in the water and quench their thirst.

"Now, Wicoochee, we are at the spring. Please tell me why I was summoned into your presence?"

"Wicoochee will speak now," said the chief, after looking scrutinizingly around.

"The Seminoles have unearthed the hatchet, and to-night inaugurate a bloody war."

The maiden's cheeks slightly paled, for she thought of her own and her relatives' helpless condition.

"Yes, a bloody war is at hand," reiterated the chief, wishing to fasten the declaration upon the mind of his startled auditor.

"The first blow is to be struck to-night, and the lodge among the golden-fruited trees must feed the flames."

The terrified maiden looked into the Seminole's face, and then, as if suddenly comprehending the meaning of his words, uttered a shriek and fell senseless at Ida's side.

In a moment Wicoochee was at Ida's side, and she held the poor girl's hands while Wicoochee bathed her face with clear, cold water, which bubbled musically from a spring at the foot of the tree.

Presently she recovered, and Wicoochee assisted her to a sitting position. She did not speak, but, with bowed head, thought of the terrible blow that had sent her to the earth.

"Will not White Bird have a drink?" asked Wicoochee, filling a rude wooden cup with water from the spring.

His voice recalled Ida from the past to the present, and, turning, she cast herself at his feet.

"Oh, Wicoochee," she pleaded, "let not the blow fall upon them! I know that it is in your power to save them, and oh! will you not do it?"

A shade of sadness crossed Wicoochee's face, and he looked pityingly upon the pleading girl.

"Wicoochee can not save all," he said, "for, if he did, he could not strike the white aggressors. His tribe would slay him, and they need his arm in the coming war. But Wicoochee can save one of the colonel's family, and that one is before him."

Ida buried her face in her hands, and wept undisturbed over the coming fate of her relatives. Wicoochee and Wicoochee looked on without exchanging a word.

When the grief-stricken girl raised her head, Wicoochee touched her arm.

"There is a place in this wood where White Bird can live till her lover comes," he said. "Wicoochee discovered it when he was hunting a long time ago. There Wicoochee can visit White Bird and cheer her. Let us go to the hiding-place."

The chief rose and caught the horses. He led them from the stream, and again assisted the girls to mount. Poor Ida scarcely realized that she was being borne away; her brain was in a whirl, and she thought only of her relatives.

At last Wicoochee drew rein at the base of a large mound in the center of the forest. Its sides were covered with a growth of live oak and fallen trees. He led Ida toward the summit, and Wicoochee followed.

Suddenly they stood before the dark mouth of an opening leading into the mound.

They were compelled to stoop to enter, and after descending a dozen artificial steps, they paused in a large apartment whose somberness was relieved by a torch. The natural floor was covered with skins, and the walls were beautifully decorated with the feathers of king vultures and other birds of gorgeous plumage.

"Wicoochee made the steps," said the Indian, "and placed the skins and feathers in their present places. This is White Bird's home till her lover comes. He may be here to-morrow."

Ida looked at the Seminole, lost in amazement. How did he know that Rodney Ellington was expected at the plantation?

"Wicoochee—just then the torch fell to the ground and was extinguished."

When Wicoochee relighted it, Wicoochee was gone!

It was the night succeeding the day freighted with the events related above.

A young man stood in the soft moonlight, and gazed upon the still smoking ruins of Arnold Greycliff's property.

He knew that the Seminoles had been there, and that the deeds which had been enacted, inaugurated a war.

Suddenly he started and looked wildly around, for some person had spoken his name—Rodney Ellington.

But not a human form met his gaze, and the almost palpable silence that followed was broken by the same voice:

"Rodney Ellington, the hatchet has been unearthed."

He turned toward the sound, and beheld a tall, immobile savage gazing at him. The red-skin seemed to have risen from the ground.

The young man recognized him and stepped to his side. The Seminole extended his

hand, but Rodney drew back and pointed to the work of the red demons.

"She is not among them," spoke the Indian. "Wicoochee would have saved all; but he could save only one."

Then Ellington grasped the chief's brown hand.

"Rodney Ellington, you saved Wicoochee from the jaws of the alligator, and Wicoochee has saved the White Bird."

"Where is she?"

"Come."

They left the desolate spot, and near the dawn of day reached the mound.

Within it the lower clasped Ida to his bosom, and kissed her pale cheeks.

She was saved. Wicoochee had become a traitor to pay a debt of gratitude. The next day he guided the lovers to a spot within sight of Fort King, where he left them.

They entered the fort in which Ida resided till the close of the Seminole war.

Throughout the conflict Rodney Ellington and Wicoochee fought bravely, but on opposite sides. They never met on the field of battle, nor after the war closed.

The heroine of our story is now the much respected wife of Rodney Ellington, the retired banker, and she often relates to smiling grandchildren the strange story of Wicoochee, the Seminole, who sleeps in the land he loved. Linda Florida, the land of flowers.

Camp-Fire Yarns.

Old Joe Logstone and the Grizzly.

"Missed him, by all that's wonderful!"

I exclaimed, as the deer bounded off in the chapparal, and old Joe Logstone slowly lowered his rifle from his face with a look of extreme mortification.

"No, lad," replied the old hunter; "not edzackly missed the creature, but it ar' just as bad, fer I ought to 'a' throwed him in his tracks. 'Thet buck ar' got my ball, ye kin depend on't, an' he won't travel fur; but, ah-a-me! hyar's what's the matter, boyee!"

And Joe laid his left hand upon the elbow of the right arm.

"Why, how is that, Joe?" I asked, suspecting that there was an adventure connected therewith. In fact I knew there was, having heard other trappers tell of how the hunter had nearly lost his arm in a desperate hand-to-hand encounter with a grizzly.

"Well, lad, the story ar' a short one, but

let's look arter thet buck and then I'll tell ye how it war."

As Joe had said, the deer had got his ball in the side, and, though not immediately mortal, had fallen in the brush some two or three hundred yards distant.

We secured the choice portions, and then seeking the shade of a good-sized mesquit bush, we sat down, and Joe prepared to spin his yarn.

"It war durin' the winter uv '49 thet the sarcumstances took place thet kin mighty nigh puttin' a end to my huntin' ar' trappin'."

"I tell ye, lad, it war a scrape thet a man don't often get intew by hisself. No, not often, by no means."

"Me an' Jim Curtis—you know Jim—hed been winterin' up on Salmon river, above Mountain lake, an' as game war plenty we hed laid by a snug lot uv pelts by time to start over to Sutter's fort, whar the traders war. The Injuns hed been sca'ed an' hed troubled us but little, so ye see we got kinder bold like, an' warnt' as sarcumstances as we hed ought to 'a' been, an' when the time kin to break up camp, Jim says as how it war better thet only one uv us sh'd go, an' the end uv the matter war thet he went with the pelts, an' I staid behind to watch the plunder an' be ready fer another spell uv trappin' when he got back."

"Ye knows, lad, thet the best uv us 'll make mistakes, an' jist hyar's when I made the wust one uv my life."

"It war powerful lonesome arter Jim hed gone, an' so I sot to huntin' jist fer the sake uv puttin' in the time, ye know, an' as I've told ye the game war in abundance, I war kept consid'able busy skinnin' an' dryin' the pelts."

"Airly one mornin' I put out fer a valley thet I know'd uv acrost a spur uv the mountain wher I hedn't yet hunted, an' whar I expected a big thing in the way uv game."

"It war a good bit uv a step, an' the sun war more'n three good hours high afore I caught sight uv the openin' thet led up to the place I war arter."

"Well, the sport war good, an' no mistake—in fact it war too good, fer I got so hard-set a-crawlin' around a pluguin' away thet I didn't see a lot uv pesky Utes thet war surroundin' me 'till I felt the whizz uv a arrow thet one uv the varmints sent alongside my ear, an' heard thar yells when they made a rush from cover."

"I war took back powerful, lad, an' thought I war bound to go under this time, an' then I begin thinkin' 'what a cursed fool I war to let Jim go off an' leave me behind."

It war too late now to whine over what war already did, an' so I sot about doin' the next best thing, an' thet war to drop one uv the imps right plum in his tracks."

"Thet shot made the balance take cover, an' I see'd a openin' fer a rush, an' ye kin bet I made it. Afore they know'd what war up I war through 'em, an' pullin' out like a scart goat up the side uv the mountain."

"The race war a long an' a hard one, boyee, an' I see'd by nigh thet the Injuns war a-goin' to outwind me, an' so I began lookin' around fer a place to cache. I could hear the imps on my trail, but thar warnt' none uv 'em in sight."

"It warnt' long afore I spied the place I war in search uv, a smart chance uv a cave in the cliff, an' into it I went head fast, nigh buttin' my brains out ag'in a cursed rock thet hung down from the top. Thet next minnit I heard the varmints yellin' outside, an' thought thet they hed treed me, but they hedn't, an' purty soon thar screeches war lost in the distance as they kept on along the side uv the mountain, follerin' my trail."

"But, lad," and the old hunter made a grimace, "it war nip an' tuck, as it turned out, whether it wouldn't 'a' been better to hev faced the Utes an' fit it out in the open daylight, an' with plenty uv fresh ar'."

"I know'd the imps'd soon find out thar mistake an' put back on thar own trail, an' so I perceeded on a kind uv y'y-gu uv diskivry back into the hole. As I sed, it war a right smart chance uv a place, an' I reckon mebbe I went as fur as a hundred or more yards back ards afore I war brought in all standin' by the damnestest savagest growl thet ever I hear in more'n thirty years in the mount'ins an' peraries."

"I know'd it in a minnit. I hed heard Ole Eph talk too often not to be sartin it war him, an' I tell ye, boyee, my heart jist stopped chuck off, an' I felt thet shaky in the knees thet I hed to lean up ag'in the side uv the cave to keep on my pins at all."

"It ain't no joke, lad, to meet a grizzly out on the open peraira with a rifle in yer hands, an' plenty uv daylight to look through the sights. But, ter tackle one uv 'em in a narrow cave, whar it ar' as dark as a stack uv black cats in a cellar 'thout a winder, ar' a serious matter, an' no mistake."

"Wagh! it makes me sick at the stummick ter think uv thet tussel."

"It warnt' long comin', ole Eph warnt', an' the way he did kin at me war with a rush an' a growl thet made the very rocks shake. Ye see the ole cuss hed been asleep fer two or three weeks, or mebbe more, an'

Well, ter give the devil his dues, them Utes treated me purty well, fur Injuns, thet ar'."

"It war nigh onto six months afore I war able to travel enough ter escape, but I did make tracks one dark night an' they never even caught sight o' my trail arterwards. I made a bee-line fer Mountain lake, an' may I thar warnt' Jim Curtis settin' on the old stump waitin' fer me to turn up, so he said."

"My arm hain't never been the same since, lad, an' sometimes it weakens on me jist at the wrong minnit, like it did awhile ago, when I kin all-fired nigh missin' thet buck. But it's some good, yit, my boyee, an' I'll prove it, boyee, afore long."

"A Queer Fish."

BY WALTER A. ROSE.

WHEN out West a few months ago, I chanced to meet a lunk, weather-worn, but brawny settler from Kansas. As I wished to hear from the lips of "one who knew" something concerning life in the wilder regions of the States, I endeavored to draw him into conversation, but soon found that I had a difficult task to accomplish, as he was apparently of a taciturn disposition. In due course of time, however, his tongue "thawed," and from many incidents in his frontier experience which he related, I quote the following, giving, as near as I can recollect, his own words:

"One't I was located near Fort Larned, and what with tradin' fish and game ter the sojers when times war dull, and bein' employed as scout when any Injin-fightin' hed ter be done, I made out purty well. About the time whar I'm a-gwine ter tell yer 'bout happened, things war very dull; nary red-skin hed bin see'd fur weeks, an' the sojers began ter think there weren't no danger o' their har' bein' raised. I thort they'd shiften their campin'-ground fur good, so weren't as cautious as I hed bin."

"One day I started fer a crick thar was chuck full o' trout, fine speckle-backs, weighin' in gen'ral more'n four pound, an' I only tuk my old rifle in 'dition to my fishin'-rod an' gear, fer I didn't want to be hampered, as the distance to the crick was considerable, an' the weather almighty hot. Wal, the day was purty fur gone when I reached the stream, an' by the time I'd hed hed about half-a-dozen brace, night war comin' on purty lively, so I made travel fur hum at



WICOOCHIE, THE SEMINOLE.

one't. I'd got ter within tew miles o' my shanty, when a pack o' durned wolves started out o' a thicket I was skirrin' an' made right fur me. I leveled at the foremost one an' fired; he fell, an' the others seemed a bit skeered, so I hed time to load ag'in, edgin' to ards a tree as I did so. I rolled an' other o' the critters over, but as his comrades seemed sorter mad at this, an' inclined to attack me, I sprung on ter a limb o' the tree I were under, an' settlin' myself betwixt two forks, potted them all 'cept one. I hedn't nary ball left fur him, so I tried to scream him off; but it weren't no manner o' use; the infernal critter sot there on his hams, howlin' fer reinforcements, and ready ter spring on ter me, if I lept down."

"I didn't want ter stay in the tree all night, fer it weren't no ways comfortable, so I cast about in my mind fer a dodge ter trick the bloody animal. I thort on one at last. I'd got sum purty strong fish-books in my pocket, so I tied three on 'em together an' laid up four parts o' fishin'-line to form a stout cord; then I baited the hooks with a chunk o' deer's flesh thet I had in my bag, an' havin' fixed the end o' the line to a branch, threw the meat to ards the wolf."

"The cuss snap it up quicker nor lightnin', an' when 'twas well down his gullet I checked the line. Thet critter sprung o' one side an' howled like thunder, but I'd got him fast, an' I hauled him up until he was durned near choked with his own insides. He couldn't yell no longer, so I jest sprung off the tree, stuck my knife half-deep into his throat an' laid him out. I made tracks fer hum arter that, an' the sojers had a good larf next day, when they heard I'd bin fishin' an' ketch'd a wolf!"

WHEN I go to a hotel to sleep I always lie awake to listen for alarms of fire. Last night some fellow whispered "fire," through the keyhole of my door, and as I was in the fifth story, and never like to be behind in anything, especially in getting down-stairs, I showed great presence of mind in getting out of bed serenely and suddenly—suddenly's the word—hastily put both legs in the sleeves of my coat, got my arms in my pantaloons, went out without waiting to unlock the door—fled frantically down-stairs, rushed into the parlor, where there was an evening party going on, recovered breath enough to ask where the fire was, found I had been sold at a ruinous discount; discovered my suit didn't fit, and went up them stairs like a spotted cat after a six-legged mouse.

JOE KING.

Ah sun that heated seven times hot
Becomes a regular potent tot!
Ah winds that never, never blow!
Ah breath of life that seems to go!
Ah sweat that from the brow doth speed,
By which we do not earn our bread!
Ah false, false paper collars,
That melt away like spendthrifts' dollars!
Ah handkerchiefs turned into mops!
Ah noses red before your time!
Ah cheeks turned into frying chops,
Reminding one of a hotter clime!
Ah linen coats that hang like towels,
At which the dear wife looks and growls!
Ah tender love that waxes warm!
Ah freezing looks that lose their charm!
Ah wilting cabbages and onions,
Ah hercely-burning corns and bunions!
Ah butter in the melting mood!
Ah earth that is a Solitude!
Ah mercury that rises higher,
Till man is fain to halloo, "Fire!"
Ah travelers without umbrellas!
Ah ye that haven't any cellars!
Ah burning lips that breathe in sighs!
Ah blood-dissolving marriage ties!
Ah quick that never will run red!
Ah ice that burns the hands that hold it!
Ah tubs that must go on a "bust!"
August 11!

Beat Time's Notes.

It is so hard to find out the meaning of men's actions that three dictionaries are entirely inadequate to the emergency.

The following correspondence succinctly explains itself:

"BEAT TIME, ESQ.:

"The undersigned, having great respect for your private virtues, which your modesty never allows to become public, and knowing that your dishonesty is above suspicion, beg to be allowed the use of your name for the presidency in 1872—and for any other little thing it might answer for."

"Very truly,
MICHAEL MULLONY, JULIUS CESAR JOHNSON,
MEERS FUN, YACOB SCHMIDT,
"and fifteen reams of others."

"Michael Mullony and others:

"GENTLEMEN: You have seen fit to ask me for the use of my honorable name in the next campaign for the presidency. I humbly thank you for your considerations, but I believe in my heart of hearts that you might have found some other man who would fill that important office nearly as well as myself, if not almost so."

"The reins of government should be in the hands of a competent man, and I am very sorry that I can not consistently refuse to accept them."

"I elected, and I have no doubt of the fact, providing I can find assassins for all of my constituents, my present business would not prevent me from putting in two or three days each year at Washington."

"I shall go in for relieving the poor—of what little they have left; and all honest men at present in office, whether they are rascals or rogues, I shall remove. I shall reduce the tax on whisky, and the internal revenue shall be entirely removed from tooth-picks. Regretting, gentlemen, that it is impossible to find any other man as competent as myself,

"I remain, yours for the time being,
"BEAT TIME."

AN Indian went into a western saw-mill, got up on the log and went to eating the miller's dinner, when the saw coming closer scratched him on the back; he turned and threw his arms about the saw for a tussle, but it cut him in two. However, the saw was so sharp he wasn't aware of his misfortune, and he didn't find it out to the day of his death.

AN Irish friend of mine once laid his hand upon a circular saw and didn't discover it had been cut off until he went to scratch his head.

I HEAR of people rejuvenating aged butter by some process or other. Boarding-house keepers will be sorry to hear of this. What a benefit it would be if some one would invent something to take the taste out of bad eggs, and correct spoiled oysters!

It is hinted that men get their hair shingled to keep from getting water on the brain—an unnecessary precaution with some.

THE zebra is a calico-colored animal whose fondness for travel keeps him roaming about the country with a menagerie. The fellow who paints him every morning told me with tears in his eyes that the stripes were natural. Little children will recognize the zebra as the last letter in the alphabet.

SWILLUM, getting tired of this world—and the feeling was mutual—took a dose of strychnine, but unluckily it didn't do him any good, that is it failed to make a ten-strike. As a last resort he took a dose of boarding-house hash which effectually settled his own for him.

In our last moments what a consolation will it be for us to know we have spent our lives in telling our neighbor of his faults, and overseeing his business!

A FELLOW absurdly wishes to know if Lo, the poor Indian, is any relation of Behold, the upright man.

A MAN lost his presence of mind one day, and got a railroad gauge, and went to hunting it, but failed to find it; then he got a map, and while looking over several states he fell into the sea on the map, but managed to get into one of the steamships engraved on the sea, where he remains to this day, as the ship is in a dead calm, and can't make shore. His presence of mind is still absent, and the maker of the map for imitating the sea so perfectly has been arrested for counterfeiting.

A FRIEND of mine is a waiter by profession. He occupies a store-box down on the corner, where he waits all day for night to come, when he goes to bed. He never varies his occupation.

WHEN molasses is going up it is said to be the most syrup-rising thing in the world.

THE worship of golden calves is pure idolatry.

SOME men are eternally writing their names on walls; when I read them I always translate, "Weighed in the balance and found wanting."

THE man who held his breath that he might live long in this world was the principal proprietor of an inopportune funeral.

WHAT is an iceberg? A lump of ice floating in a mint julep.

BEAT TIME.